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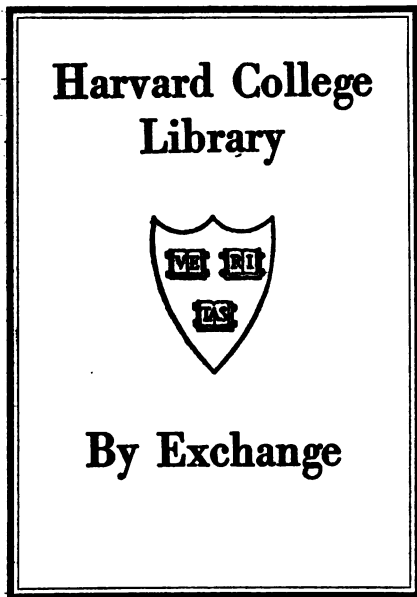
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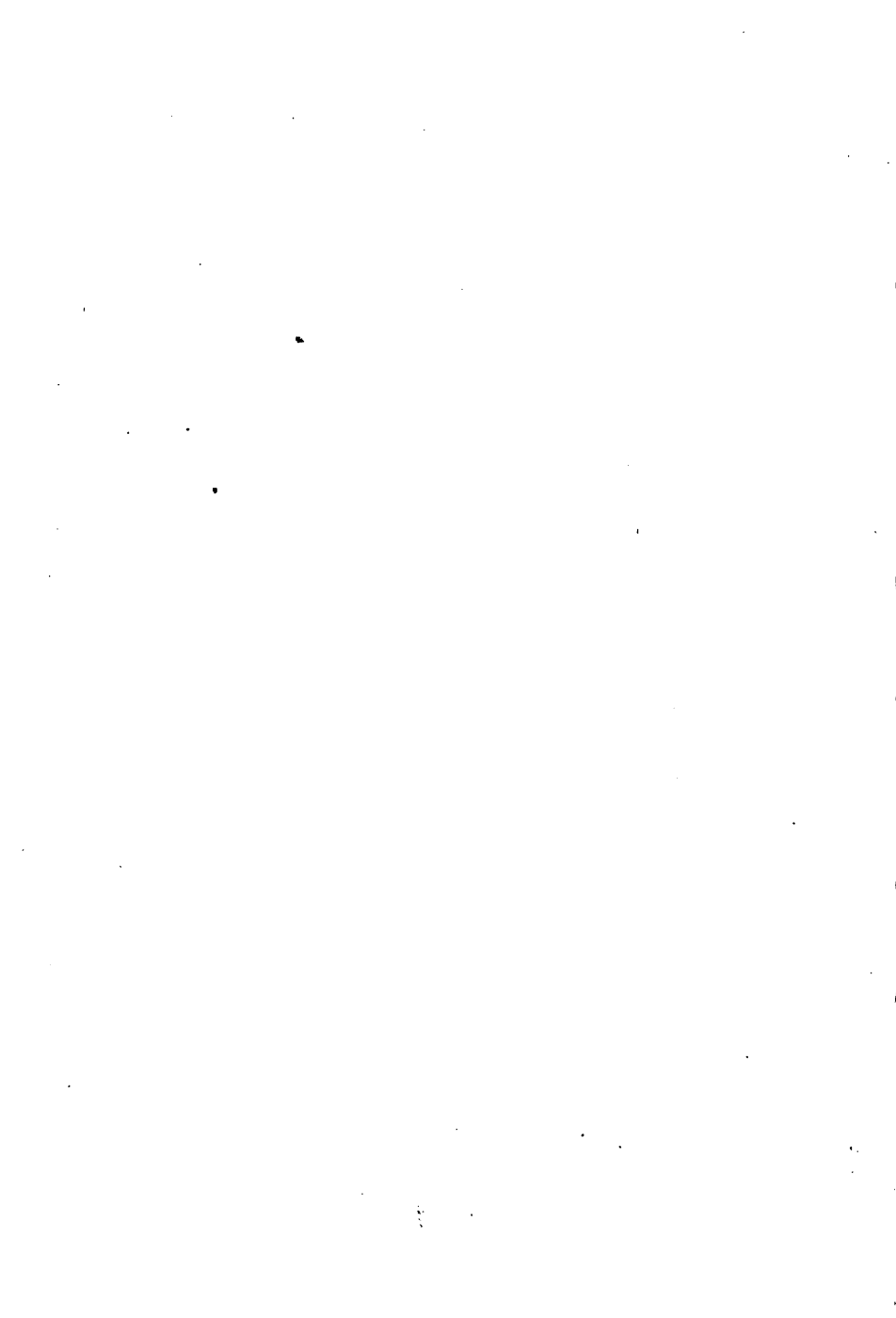
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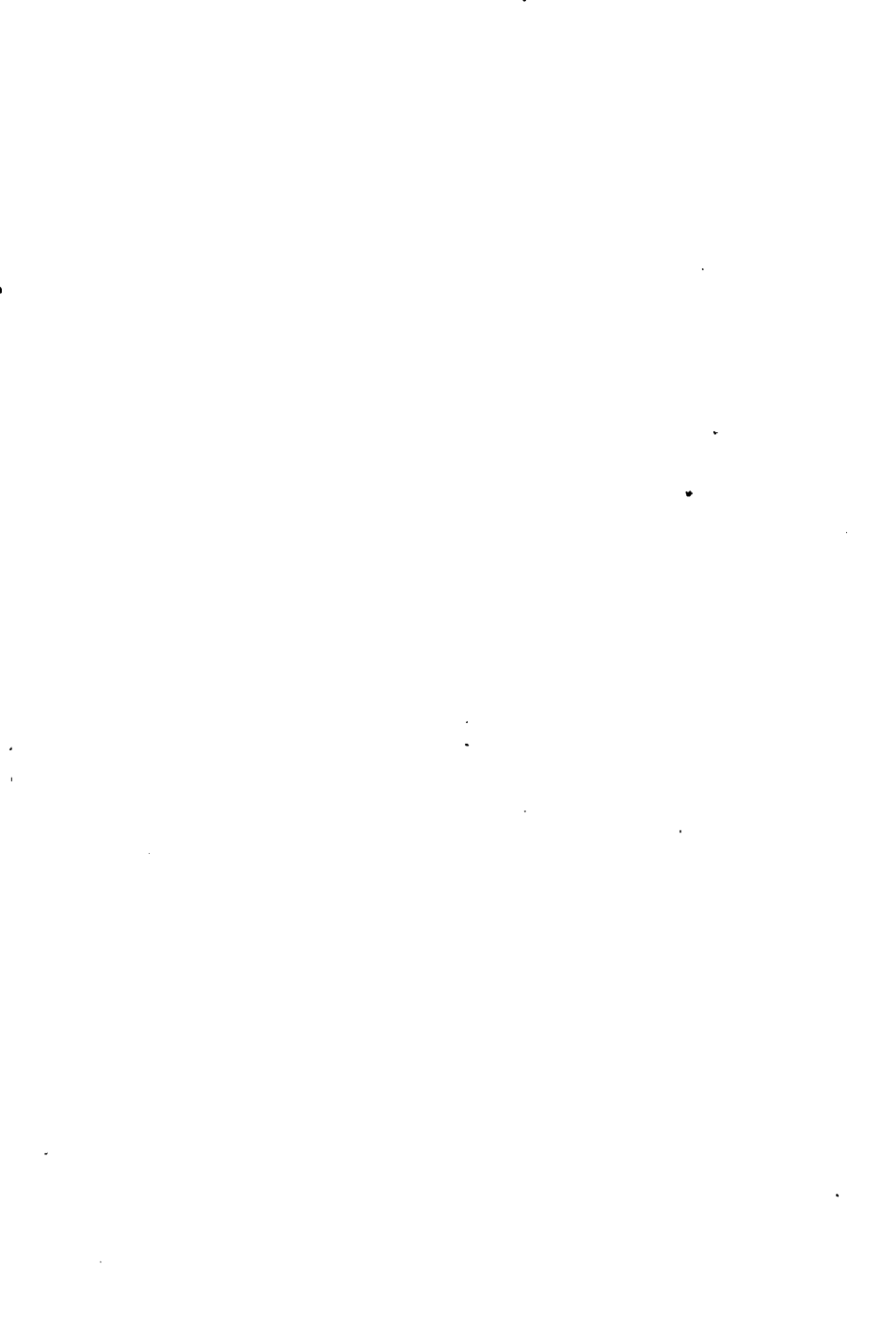
Francis Rowdlett Wain
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POETS' CORNER, WESTMINSTER ABBEY

ENGLISH LITERATURE

BY

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CHICAGO
SCOTT, FORESMAN AND COMPANY
1905

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Lina Malone

PREFACE.

How to teach literature is too large a question to be answered in a preface. But there is a preliminary question, of narrower scope, which the author would like to urge upon every teacher for careful consideration. It is this: What shall be selected for teaching from among the things that commonly pass for literature, and what proportionate emphasis shall be laid on them? How much history, for instance, shall be included, and how much biography? Which writers shall be chosen and which omitted? How much attention shall be given to individuals and how much to general movements; how much stress laid on intellectual analysis and how much on emotional or æsthetic appreciation?

The author's answer is generally, though not always, to be found in the method of this book. If more of historical background than there is space for here seem desirable it can easily be filled in from standard histories. But so long as the study is literature, history must be kept duly subordinate. There is no need to make history supply the gaps in the literature itself where the latter is meagre. A similar caution is applicable to biography. The modern tendency to make much of this element is on the whole commendable. But the fact that biography is interesting and easily taught should not tempt one to exaggerate its importance; biography, like history, is not literature. It is pertinent only so far as a writer's life is directly related to, or serves to illuminate, his written works. It is not equally needed in all cases. In the study of a subjective, emotional writer like Ruskin, a life-history is essential. In the study of a dramatist like Shakespeare, it can be almost wholly dispensed with. A satirist or a sentimentalist requires to be

read in the light of his environment and temperament, a philosopher or a historian much less so.

The particular writers to be selected for study must be determined by the time at the teacher's disposal, with some help, perhaps, from the relative emphasis accorded them in this book. Of course, the selection here made, which inevitably represents a personal judgment, will not satisfy all critics. The author has endeavored never to mention a writer and seldom a work without some accompanying characterization to justify the mention, but that he has omitted no names of greater desert than some that are included he would be foolhardy to claim. The minor names may be passed with a glance, as serving chiefly the purpose of perspective. Among the major names there will be no difficulty of choice, for the major hierarchies are no longer in dispute. It is a matter for more concern that, whatever writers are studied, the student be sent directly to their works. To this end no such description of a work has been given herein as might seem to be a sufficient substitute for the work itself. Stories, for instance, are not outlined or retold. But wherever space permitted, citations have been made, as much with a view to alluring the student to read the full originals as for the sake of illustration.

A disproportion in treatment that, from the historical point of view, is not critical, will be noted in the relatively large space given to nineteenth century writers. The reason for this disproportion in a text-book of the present kind should be sufficiently apparent to require no defence. The order of treatment must likewise be its own justification. The safe order of chronology has been adhered to as far as is consistent with the presentation of natural groups and movements; but when several chapters cover the same period, as the three chapters on the Elizabethan age, or the three chapters on the Victorian writers, they must be regarded as parallel, not as consecutive. The classified topical index, which precedes the general index, will be of much assistance in studying the history of the

movements themselves and allied subjects, especially when these cover periods so great that their treatment is necessarily scattered.

—As for the æsthetic appreciation of literature, in distinction from colder analysis, the author is firmly of the opinion that, however difficult the former may be to teach, it is the main end of elementary literary study. He who aims at scholarship will take a different view; but for the average student, the chief office of literature is to enrich the leisure of his life. A text-book based on such a conception need not assume to be rigorously critical; it does not set before itself the object of enabling students to sit in absolutely dispassionate judgment upon the works they are invited to enjoy. The author is therefore prepared to hear with equanimity the charge that he has sometimes been guilty of over-praise. At the same time he trusts that no panegyric has been lightly evoked or mistakenly bestowed,—that even his superlatives, when consideration is taken of the qualifications that attend them and allowance made for honest differences of opinion, will be found to have been not thoughtlessly employed. To be appreciative without becoming uncritical, and above all without losing grasp of substance, has been the constant aim.

In this, as in the companion work on *American Literature*, the advice and criticism of Professor Lindsay Todd Damon, now of Brown University, have been liberally given and gladly accepted. In a few instances of disagreement upon order or inclusion, or upon critical estimates, the author has naturally felt obliged to abide by his own judgment and exonerate Professor Damon from any share of blame. The portrait of Queen Elizabeth and the illustrations in the chapter on the Elizabethan drama are taken from the library edition of Sidney Lee's "*Life of Shakespeare*."

A. G. N.

Stanford University, Cal.

June 1, 1905.

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INTRODUCTION

The position occupied by the English people among the great nations of the modern world is a position which has been won by more than fifteen centuries of slow progress and varied conflict. The record of the outward events of these centuries is the fascinating story of English history. The more spontaneous record of the inner lives of the men and women who made this history, of their reaction upon events and their reflections upon them, of their social needs and intellectual aspirations, is the equally fascinating story of English literature. The two records run side by side, and of the latter in particular it is not possible to give a detailed and lucid account without some preliminary sketch of the former.

Two thousand years ago the British Isles were not inhabited by the English race. When Cæsar landed there, fifty-five years before the Christian era, he found a Celtic people—the ancestors of the present Welsh, Irish, and Highland Scotch. Several centuries of Roman rule followed, in the course of which the southern portion of these people were partially civilized and Romanized. But early in the fifth century the Roman legions, needed for the defence of Rome against the great wave of barbarian invasion from the North, were withdrawn. Immediately the more barbarous tribes to the west and north began to press southward, and the southern Celts, or Britons as they were now called, had to ask certain of the Teutonic (Germanic) tribes dwelling by the coast of the North Sea to come to their assistance. These wild sea-rovers, who had long harassed the British shores, kept at bay only by the Roman power, were ready enough to come. But once they had secured a foothold, it was not long before they turned against their British allies and permanently established themselves in power. This, in short, was the English Conquest,

which made Britain England. It dates from the landing of Hengist and Horsa about 449.

Through the years that follow we may trace the records with varying distinctness. On the one hand, we get glimpses of the struggling British chieftains as they were slowly pressed westward by their new enemies. On the other hand, we see that among the conquerors themselves there was by no means political unity. Three different tribes had come from the shores of the German ocean:—the Jutes, who settled in the extreme southeast; the Saxons, who occupied the banks of the Thames and most of the region to the south and west; and the Angles, who seized all the northward portion, "North Humber Land." The Angles were the first to erect a powerful kingdom, and it was in Northumbria that a literature was first cultivated.* But in the eighth and ninth centuries the Northumbrian ascendancy was lost. The kingdom was torn with a civil strife that reduced it to anarchy, and the Danes, who came with a fresh barbarian irruption from the continent, found it an easy prey. The leadership among the English passed to the West Saxon kingdom in the south under Egberht (802), whose grandson, Ælfred, succeeded a little later in checking the Danes. Altogether the Saxon supremacy lasted for about a century and a half; then the Dane conquered Wessex, too, and was for a short while master. A period was put to this era in 1066 by the Norman Conquest, which brought new elements into the race and ultimately into the language, unified the diverse interests, and founded the later line of kings.

Such, in bare outline, is England's early history. The story of her language we must also glance at. The various dialects of the tribes who came from the continent constituted a Teutonic language of the Low German group—a tongue, that is, spoken by the dwellers in the lowland and coast region extending from

*Hence the name England (Engla land, Angle-land). The late Greeks had called the island Albion, and the Romans Britannia. The name Britain was revived about the time of Henry VIII. in connection with the efforts made to unite England and Scotland. In 1604 James I. was proclaimed "King of Great Britain."

the mouth of the Rhine northeastward. Its most direct descendants outside of England to-day are Frisian and Dutch. Modern German, descended from the High German group, stands at a slightly further remove. The language as it was first used in England, we now call by the name of Old English. There were three or four dialects, corresponding to the different tribes:—the Anglian, which was spoken in the north; the West Saxon (later called the Southern), used by the Saxons in the south; and the Kentish, used by the Jutes. The Anglian may be further subdivided into the Northumbrian, of the extreme north, and the Mercian (later known as the Midland). Only the Anglian, in its two divisions, and the West Saxon were prominent, whence the name Anglo-Saxon has sometimes been used for Old English. But as the name English was early used even by the Saxons themselves, owing to the prior ascendancy of the Anglian people and the Northumbrian dialect, it has the stronger claim. It was not the Northumbrian dialect, however, that was destined to grow into modern English. It was first supplanted in literary supremacy by the West Saxon, when the latter kingdom rose to power. Then the supremacy was finally transferred to the Mercian, or Midland, the dialect spoken in and about London, the capital city. This took place about the fourteenth century, which makes it evident that the whole question of dialects is one that concerns philology rather than literature. For in the early centuries the amount of writing having a literary value was comparatively small; and since the invention of printing, literature has naturally sought a common dialect—the language of the learned. Exceptions in the later literature are to be found only here and there, as in the native Scotch poetry of Burns, the imitative dialect poems of Tennyson, or the character sketches of modern fiction.

Looking at the English language as a whole, however, we find other considerations of importance. We observe that the framework of it remains to this day Teutonic; its affinity with the German language may be easily traced in the words of the old native stock—the numerals, for instance, the pronouns, preposi-

tions, and conjunctions, and the simpler, more usual nouns, adjectives, and verbs. But the vocabulary has been materially changed and enlarged by many influences. A few Celtic words were picked up. Latin influence was felt from the time of the conversion of the English to Christianity at the end of the sixth century. The incursions of the Danes brought a slight Norse element. Then came the Norman conquest in 1066, marked before and after by a decided French, or Romance, influence. Finally, four centuries later, with the revival of classical learning, the Latin influence received a new impetus, and a Greek influence was added. Since then English has gone steadily on, making new words for its new needs from these dead languages and borrowing freely from a score of living ones, to build up the exceedingly composite tongue which is spoken and written to-day.*

The two events just referred to, the Danish and Norman conquests in the eleventh century, and the Renaissance or revival of learning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, both of which, as indicated, were accompanied by important linguistic changes, serve to divide the entire history of the language and its literature into three pretty clearly defined periods:

- I. The Old English (or Anglo-Saxon) Period, extending to about 1100.
- II. The Middle English Period, extending from 1100 to about 1500.
- III. The Modern English Period, extending from 1500 to the present time.

In the present book the modern period will be further subdivided, on other than linguistic grounds. Of course the great bulk of the literature comes in this period; yet the second enrolls one of the highest names in English poetry, Chaucer; and the first, though now so remote that its language looks more like a foreign language than our native tongue, contains both matter of historical value and some very worthy poetry.

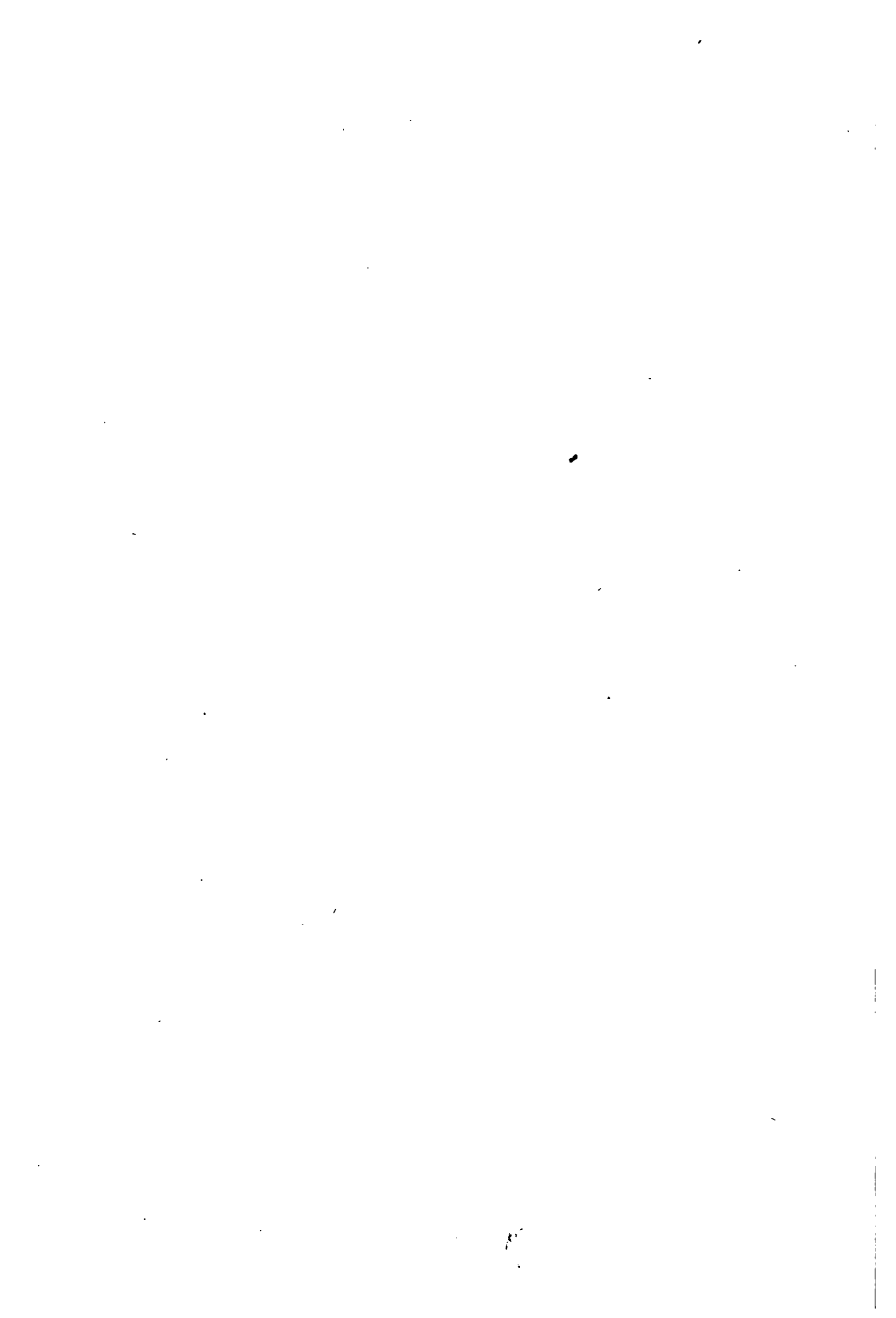
*See Appendix.

PART I

OLD ENGLISH PERIOD

**FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE
NORMAN CONQUEST**

C. 670-1066



CHAPTER I

SEVENTH AND EIGHTH CENTURIES—NORTHUMBRIAN ASCENDENCY

<i>The English land in Britain</i> . . . 449	<i>Beowulf</i>	Mohammed: <i>The</i>
<i>Augustine converts Kent</i> 597	CÆDMON	<i>Koran</i>
<i>Eadwine king of Northumbria</i> 617	BEDE	Haroun-al-Rashid
<i>Æthelred king of Mercia</i> 675	CYNEWULF	Charlemagne
<i>First landing of Danes</i> 787		

So far as the remains show, the literature of England was the earliest among the literatures of northern Europe to reach an advanced stage of development. It is not now possible to determine just how far back we may push its beginnings. No existing manuscript can be dated earlier than the seventh century and very few earlier than the eleventh.* But of the more than twenty thousand lines of poetry that have come down from the Old English period there are poems which from their character we know must have begun to take shape very early, poems, indeed, that in some part must have been brought by the Angles and Saxons from their home beyond the North Sea. The most famous of these, and the one which is in every way the most worthy of study, is *Beowulf*, now admitted to be the oldest preserved epic of the Teutonic race.

The poem has had a remarkable history. It points unmis-

*The surviving remains of Old English poetry are chiefly contained in four manuscripts: (1) The Junian MS., in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, containing the *Paraphrases* attributed to Cædmon (see p. 23). (2) The Cottonian MS., probably of the tenth century, containing *Beowulf* and *Judith*. (3) The very important Exeter Book, given by Bishop Leofric to his cathedral church at Exeter about 1050, containing among other things the poems called *Crist*, *The Phoenix*, *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, *Riddles*, *Deor's Lament*, and the poem that is accounted the very oldest in the literature, *Widsith*. (4) The Vercelli Book, discovered at Vercelli, Italy, and made known in 1832, containing homilies and half a dozen poems, among them *The Dream of the Rood*.

takably to a continental origin, and yet, while parallels are not lacking, direct traces of the tale are hard to find in the lore of the continental peoples. It came out of the darkness "Beowulf," and almost returned to the darkness whence it came. ante 700.

For nearly a thousand years it lay virtually buried, while English literature evolved its Chaucer, its Shakespeare, and its Milton. In 1705 the single manuscript known to be extant was brought to light, narrowly to escape perishing by fire a few years later. When in 1815 it was at length published, its true character and value were recognized. Though it was probably cast into its present form, and possibly by one singer, about the year 700, the several episodes which make up the tale may have been the common property of the singers, or "gleemen," for many years before. The gleeman, it should be understood, was a professional minstrel whose duty it was to furnish song and music at the feast. He was only a musician and is to be distinguished from the actual composer of a poem, the *scop*, or "shaper," though sometimes, of course, composer and singer were one and the same person. In any case the professional minstrel would exercise more or less liberty in changing and adapting the songs he sang, and a song of any length might well be the product of slow development through several generations. It is thus impossible to assert with confidence the single authorship of a poem like *Beowulf*.

It is a heroic poem, recounting the deeds of Beowulf, a prince of the Swedish tribe known as the Geats. The scene is laid among the Danes of the island of Seeland, and the Geats. Hrothgar, king of the Danes, is pictured as reigning among his liegemen in the great mead-hall, Heorot, "hall of the hart-antlers." But his joy is marred by the ravages of a monster of the fens, Grendel, who comes nightly to slaughter and devour his thanes. There is a brief description of the deeds of this terrible "stalker of the heath:"

"Forth then he sallied, soon as the night fell,
To visit the high built hall of the Ring-Danes,

And see how they fared there after the beer-feast.
 He found therein a band of retainers
 Drowsy with drinking: they dreamed not of sorrow,
 Misfortunes of men. The monster of evil,
 Grim and greedy, fell straight to work,
 Hideous, horrible, and seized in their slumber
 Thrice ten thane-men. Then he made off,
 Glutted and gloating, to return to his lair,
 Sated with slaughter, to win again homeward."

Beowulf in Sweden hears of the deeds of Grendel, and with fourteen Geats hurries across the sea to Hrothgar's assistance. The landing is made and their approach duly heralded.

"The way was bright with glittering pebbles,
 The path that guided them. Gleamed the byrnie,
 Hard and hand-riveted; the bright iron rings
 Sang in the armor, as on to the mead-hall
 In battle-gear they fared together.
 Weary of the sea, they set their great shields,
 Strong-built bucklers, against the house-wall,
 And with clanking of byrnies, the harness of heroes,
 Sat down on the benches."

So, in alternate narration and description, with speech-making and drinking and gift-giving, with battle-cry and funeral wail, the story runs through three thousand tumultuous lines. Grendel is slain, and Grendel's mother; and Beowulf returns to the land of the Geats where he is made king and reigns for fifty years, dying at last in a victorious fight with a fire-dragon.

The language of this poem—the Old English, or Anglo-Saxon—can be read to-day only after considerable study, though its likeness to modern English is apparent.

Wado weallende, wedera cealdost,
 Nipende niht, and norðan wind,
 Heaðo-grim andhwearf. Hreó wæron yða;
 Wæs mere-fixa mód onhréred.*

* When the Roman alphabet was adopted, two sounds not found in that alphabet were still represented by the old runes "thorn" and "wen", *þ* (*th*), and *ƿ* (*w*). The latter is no longer employed in printed texts, *w* being substituted; and for the former the character, *ð* (= *dd*) is commonly substituted between vowels and at the end of a word. A survival of the former character may still occasionally be seen in the archaic *ye* for *the*,

“Weltering waves, coldest of weathers,
Darkening night, and a north wind,
Cruelly beat on us. Rough were the billows;
The mood of the sea-monsters was aroused.”

The metrical scheme is that of all Old English verse, being timed by accents, or stressed syllables, with the accents reinforced by beginning-rhyme, or alliteration. Each line is divided by a pause into two half-lines. Each half-line has two strong stresses, together with light syllables irregularly distributed. The first strong syllable of the second half-line is the rhyme-giver, and with it one, or more regularly both, of the stressed syllables of the first half-line alliterate. The first two lines of the specimen just given, with alliteration in *w* and *n*, are good examples. There are frequent variations, however, from this normal type. A further technical feature of the poetry is what is known as parallelism, the frequent repetition of a thought in different words. Several instances may be noted in the translations given. These characteristics, so useful in assisting the memory, were but natural at a period when poetry was transmitted orally, and, as was said above, usually to the accompaniment of music.

Beowulf, then, takes its place as a poem evolved out of the early conditions of Teutonic society, and as a poem which more completely than any other single work of art explicitly reveals those conditions. It stands a singularly worthy monument to the genius of its lost creator. Though it has a few Christian elements, the accretions of the period subsequent to the Christianizing of the English, it is essentially the product of a race that as yet knew nothing of Rome or Palestine, a race still worshipping the powers of Nature, the gods of Strife and Thunder and Darkness. The concrete yet wild northern imagination is visible in its direct metaphorical compounds; wild deer are “heath-rangers,” human bodies are “bone-prisons,” ships are “sea-goers,” or “wave-riders,” or “foamy-necked floaters” over the “whale’s-path,” the night is a “shadow-helm,” the sun is a “candle of heaven.” The whole poem is alive with

a spirit of hardy adventure; it resounds with the noise of feasting and banter, and with the ring of swords upon coats of mail; while around and over its human drama of gross appetites and restless passions are those breeders of strange superstitions, the mist-exhalations of the northern moorlands and the mysterious voices of wind and sea.

In the light of all that we know of modern English literature, it is impossible not to see the significance of these things. Here already is that sensitiveness to nature, in her power and her beauty alike, that has invariably come to the surface along with all that is best in English poetry, whether it be in Chaucer or Shakespeare, Wordsworth or Tennyson. More especially, here are that love of the sea and pride in the mastery of it that have constituted, both in history and in song, one of the chief enduring glories of the "sea-girt isle." It is the same thing that we find throbbing through the lines of the ballad of *Sir Patrick Spens*, surrounding with a magic spell Prospero's isle in *The Tempest*, investing itself with romantic color in *The Ancient Mariner*, or rising into the region of spiritual symbolism in *Crossing the Bar*. There is the same myth-making faculty at work, which still reads life and intelligence into natural forces. These forces, to a people who reckoned their years by winters and their weeks by nights, appeared stern and sombre, and the creatures of their imagination were correspondingly fierce and malign,—fire-demons, and frost-giants, and half-human Grendel-monsters of the marsh-mists and the sea. In later times, under Christian influence, and through contact with Celtic folk-lore, the monsters gave place to kindlier spirits. But the fancy that creates them has worked with its old activity, giving us beautiful *Faërie Queenes* and *Midsummer Night's Dreams*. There are fairy-tales even yet, and fairies so bold as to play their pranks in the heart of modern London.* Thus in the strains of a nation's poetry no less than in the sounds of its speech or the complexions of its people, are descent and kinship declared.

* J. M. Barrie: *The Little White Bird*.

Of other poems of this early period, mostly fragmentary,—of *Widsith*, for instance, the Ulyssean “Far-Traveller,” or of the Achillean *Fight at Finnsburg*,—there is no space here to speak. It is enough to have described the chief literary monument of our pagan era. Christianity was at hand, and was beginning to color even these pagan records. For after the English had finally established their power in Britain, Rome came again, but this time in peaceful guise. In 597, Augustine and his band of forty monks landed among the Jutes in Kent and took up residence in Canterbury. As the religion they brought spread northward, the old nature-worship went down before it. Churches sprang up; monasteries were founded. Latin was reintroduced as the language of the Church and of learning, and the way was prepared for the ultimate union of northern genius and southern art in one of the most splendid literatures of modern times.

It is to Christianized England that Cædmon belongs, the man with whose name is associated the first recorded bit of English literary history. The story runs that in the latter half of the seventh century, near the monastery of the Abbess Hild, at Whitby, on the wild Northumbrian coast, there lived a man who could not sing, and who, when the harp went round at the feast, was wont to leave the banquet-hall in shame. One night, when he had fled thus to the stables where he tended the horses and oxen, he fell asleep, and some one appeared to him in a vision, saying: “Cædmon, sing to me.” “What shall I sing?” he replied. “Sing of the beginning of the created world.” So he sang, and awaking he remembered the song, and made others like it. The Abbess Hild, we are further told, received Cædmon into the monastery, where the Holy Scriptures were explained to him by the learned men, and he thereafter employed his gift in turning them into poetry.

Unfortunately we cannot be certain that any of this work has survived. An Old English MS., found and printed in

Milton's time, contains a metrical paraphrase of the book of *Genesis* and two poems entitled *Exodus* and *Daniel*, which answer fairly well to the description of Cædmon's hymns; and scholars have with some confidence ascribed the older portions of the *Genesis* to him. Again, in the same MS. with *Beowulf*, is a highly dramatic version of the Biblical story of *Judith* which has naturally suggested Cædmon's authorship, though the possibility has been nearly disproved. It is a matter of little consequence. We believe that a Cædmon lived and sang; and we know that we possess, in the better parts of these poems, further proof of the vigor and imaginative power of Old English poetry. For there is more in the poems than mere paraphrase. The waters of the Deluge, for instance, are pictured as a veritable raging ocean with the ark riding over them "at large under the skies." What in the Bible is merely a suggestion of a battle is expanded in the poem into a fierce and dramatic conflict. The fall of Lucifer and his angels is vividly described:—

"Therefore in worse light
Under the Earth beneath, Almighty God
Had placed them triumphless in the swart Hell.
There evening, immeasurably long,
Brings to each fiend renewal of the fire;
Then comes, at dawn, the east wind, keen with frost
Its dart, or fire continual, torments sharp."

(Translation by Henry Morley.)

Not a few resemblances to this part may be found in *Paradise Lost*, and it is quite possible that Milton knew of the poem.

Bæda, the "venerable Bede," a writer of prose, must take a place by the side of Cædmon with the progenitors of our literature. He too, was a Northumbrian, born about the year 673. He spent his life in the monastery at Jarrow, near the mouth of the Tyne, always, in his own words, "taking delight in learning, teaching, and writing." The most prolific source of our knowledge of the earlier history of Britain is his *Ecclesiastical History*, which gives a concise ac-

Bede,
673?–735.

count from the landing of Cæsar and a detailed relation from the advent of Augustine. It is from this history that we draw the story of Cædmon. But the influence of Bede upon our native literature was an indirect one, since his works, like nearly all the prose of the period, were written in Latin; it is only after Alfred had the *IIistory* translated into the West Saxon tongue that that book becomes an English classic.

The desire to attach to ancient poems an author's name and history, and so in some manner to visualize the poet, is an exceedingly natural one. It was therefore with much satisfaction

Cynewulf,
fl. 750?

that in several Old English poems the author's name was discovered spelled out in runes, after the manner of an acrostic. This name was Cynewulf. History has been vainly appealed to for further light. But by ascribing, on various grounds, certain other poems to the same author, and putting together the hints they contain, a story has been made out for him. Cynewulf was in all probability a Northumbrian of the eighth century, and he may well have spent his youth in gaiety as a wondering *scop*. That he composed any of the numerous *Riddles** attributed to him is extremely doubtful. Neither can we know that he was the author of the really beautiful allegory of the resurrection of Christ, *The Phoenix*. The one thing certain is that he composed the three poems known as *Crist*, *Juliana*, and *Elene*, the last-named at a time when, as he laments, his youth had fled and he was smitten with sorrow. These are all religious poems; the two latter are legends of saints. The first is a long poem in three sections, depicting the three

*Riddles, often distinctly native in character, though perhaps first imitated from Latin enigmas in hexameter verse, were a curious by-product of our early literature. The following is an example:

"Netherward my neb is set, deep inclined I fare;
And along the ground I grub, going as he guideth me
Who the hoary foe of the holt is, and the Head of me.
Forward bent he walks, he, the warden at my tail;
Through the meadows pushes me, moves me on and presses me,
Sows upon my spoor. I myself in haste am then.

Green upon one side is my ganging on;
Swart upon the other surely is my path."

(Translation by Stopford Brooke.)

The answer is: A Plow.

comings of Christ—the Nativity, the Ascent into Heaven, and the final Coming to Judgment.

“Lo, Thou art the wall-stone which erst the workmen
From the work rejected. Beseemeth thee well
That Thou shouldst be head of the hall of glory.”

The Judgment is portrayed in especially vivid language:

“The dusky flame shall fare through earth
Like a raging warrior. Where once flowed the waters,
The billowy floods, in a bath of fire
Shall the sea-fishes burn.
Water shall burn as wax.
There shall be cry and moan, and strife of the living,
Mingling of wailing with the welkin’s roar.”

The poem is permeated with pure religious fervor and may stand as a type of the Christian poetry which marks the close of the period of literary activity in Northumbria.*

* Not till near the time of Dunbar, in 1500, does this North English dialect rise again to literary importance. (See chapter VI., and Appendix.) Then, and thenceforward, the language with its literature is known as Scotch, and to it may be said to belong the still later native dialect poetry of Ramsay and Burns, and even some of the fiction of our own day.

CHAPTER II

NINTH TO ELEVENTH CENTURIES—WEST SAXON ASCENDENCY

<i>Ecgberht of Wessex overlord of all English kingdoms . . . 828</i>	KING ALFRED <i>Anglo-Saxon</i>	Verse <i>Edda</i>
<i>Ælfred king of Wessex . . . 871-901</i>	<i>Chronicle</i>	<i>Chansons de Geste</i>
<i>Cnut the Dane king 1016-1035</i>	ÆLFRED	
<i>Eadward the Confessor . . 1042-1066</i>		
<i>Harold defeated at Hastings 1066</i>		

Rather curiously, all this Northumbrian literature which we have been describing has come down to us, not in the original Northern, but in the West Saxon, or Southern, dialect. This is due to the southward shifting of power, which, as already stated, took place in the eighth and ninth centuries. As the Danes poured in year after year, overrunning especially the weakened Northumbria, homesteads and churches were burnt, monasteries with their libraries were sacked, and all that had been accomplished in government, art, and literature, threatened to disappear. It was Wessex, already grown to strength under Ecgberht, that finally succeeded in staying for a time this Danish conquest, and the chief credit for it belongs to one man, the grandson of Ecgberht, Ælfred, or, as we know him, King Alfred the Great.

Great as a warrior and statesman, Alfred was no less great as a scholar and patron of learning. He came to the throne in 871 and within seven years forced peace from the turbulent and ever encroaching Danes. Then, in such respite as he could snatch from his "various and manifold worldly cares," he addressed himself to the labor of rekindling the dying flame of learning. He gathered about him scholars and founded schools and abbeys; he worked

*Alfred the
Great,
849-901.*

to restore Christian culture, and to rescue the perishing fragments of our literature. For himself he set the task of translating some of the great books of the world into the dialect of his people. In this way we have as the work of his own hand a large body of Old English prose:—the *Pastoral Care* of Pope Gregory the Great, a manual for the clergy; the *Ecclesiastical History** of Bede, English annals, thus brought within reach of all English readers; a *History of the World* by the Spanish monk Orosius, then the standard text-book of general history; and the *Consolation of Philosophy* by Boëthius. The last is his greatest legacy; for it is much more than a translation—it is a free paraphrase, containing entire pages of original matter, and revealing everywhere the hand and soul of Alfred the Great.

Dæt bið ponne cyninges andweorc and his tol mid to ricsianne, pæt he hæbbe his lond full mannod. He sceal hæbban gebedmen and fyrdmen and weoremen, etc.

"This, then, is a king's materials and his tools to reign with: that he have his land well peopled; he must have prayer-men, and soldiers, and workmen. Thou knowest that without these tools no king can show his craft. This is also his materials which he must have besides the tools: provisions for the three classes. This is, then, their provision: land to inhabit, and gifts, and weapons, and meat, and ale, and clothes, and whatsoever is necessary for the three



STATUE OF ALFRED THE GREAT.

*It is not quite certain that the translation of this should be attributed to Alfred himself; even if not, it was done under his direction.

classes. He cannot without these preserve the tools, nor without the tools accomplish any of those things which he is commanded to perform. Therefore I was desirous of materials wherewith to exercise the power, that my talents and power should not be forgotten and concealed. For every craft and every power soon becomes old, and is passed over in silence, if it be without wisdom; for no man can accomplish any craft without wisdom. Because whatsoever is done through folly, no one can ever reckon for craft. This is now especially to be said: that I wished to live honorably whilst I lived, and after my life to leave to the men who were after me my memory in good works."

(Translation by Samuel Fox.)

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, a still greater monument of Old English prose, belongs also to Alfred's reign, in the sense that the literary influence of his court at Winchester had doubtless much to do with the compilation of it. In its entirety, however, it was the work of many hands, both before and after his time. Opening with a summary of early English history, it grew minute and copious about the date of Alfred's birth, and in this more regular manner was carried on by contemporary records for two hundred and fifty years after his death, closing with the year 1154. One of the earlier entries, under date of 755, properly 785, is the famous account of the fatal fight of Cynewulf, the West Saxon king (not the Northumbrian poet), with the ætheling (nobleman) Cyneheard. It is both more rude in style and more vivid than the later records, and is considered the oldest connected piece of English prose extant. A portion of it may be quoted, both for its spirit and for the light it throws upon the period:

755. Hér Cynewulf benam Sigebryht his rices ond Westseaxna wiotan for unryhtum dædum, buton Hamtunseire, etc.

"In this year Cynewulf and his West Saxon Wise-men took from Sigebryht his kingdom, except Hamptonshire, for unrighteous deeds; that he held, until he slew the alderman [Cumbra] who had longest dwelt with him. Then Cynewulf drove him out into Andred-forest, and he dwelt there until a herdsman stabbed him to death at Privet's-

flood, avenging the alderman Cumbra. And this Cynewulf often, in many fights, fought with the Welsh Britons; and about xxxi winters after he had the kingdom, he wanted to drive out an ætheling who was called Cyneheard (and this Cyneheard was that Sigebyrht's brother). And then he [Cyneheard] heard that the king was with a small band in the company of a woman at Merton; and he surrounded him there, and besieged the chamber, before the men who were with the king discovered him. And then the king became aware, and he went to the door and nobly defended himself, until he beheld the ætheling, and then rushed out upon him and wounded him severely. And they all kept fighting against the king until they had slain him. And then at the woman's outcry the king's thegns [retainers] perceived the disturbance, and they ran thither, whoever was ready and quickest. And the ætheling offered each of them money and life, and none of them would take it; but they kept on fighting until they all lay dead except one British hostage, and he was sorely wounded."

By virtue of this chronicle England stands alone among the nations of western Europe in having her history, practically from its beginning, written in her own tongue. It is but another of the things that show the wisdom of him who is by universal consent regarded as the wisest and greatest of English kings.

For a century after the death of Alfred the literary industry which he fostered was maintained, though in no very active spirit. The one important name is that of Ælfric, first an instructor at Winchester and later an abbot near Oxford, who, among other somewhat voluminous works, translated and wrote several sets of Homilies, or sermons, long famous in the history of the Anglo-Saxon church. The later ones are composed in a rhythmical and alliterative prose, intended clearly for delivery in some sort of recitative. His earlier work is better, having a sure and swift tread that marks an advance in the mastery of a practical prose style.

The verse of the period is meagre. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* contains several poems by unknown authors; the battle of Brunanburh (937), for instance, it records in a fine and famous song, which has been translated by Tennyson. Another fragment of verse, commonly known as the *Battle of Mal-*

Ælfric,
fl. 1005.

don, apparently composed by an eye-witness immediately after the battle (991), celebrates in lofty measures the heroic death of Byrhtnoth, a West Saxon earl, in one of the disastrous conflicts with the Danes. It closes with the heroic but hopeless stand of an old comrade over the body of his fallen chief:

Verse.

“Byrhtwold spoke, buckler uplifted;
 He was an old war-comrade; shaking his spear,
 He full boldly the men exhorted:
 ‘The soul shall the braver, the heart the bolder,
 The courage the greater be, the more our strength lessens.
 Here lieth our lord, all hewn to pieces,
 The brave man fallen. Ever may mourn
 Who now from this battle-play thinketh to turn.
 I am old in years; go hence I will not,
 But here on the ground beside my lord
 I think to lie, by this man so beloved.’”*

This is worthy poetry. But it, and the *Brunanburh*, stand almost alone. The glory of West Saxon literature lay in its prose, and to Alfred himself we look back as to the founder, if not exactly of English prose as we know it, yet of a prose which was English and which does not suffer greatly by comparison with the still rude prose which, centuries afterward, within the period of Modern English, struggled so slowly up to vigorous maturity.

Thus closed the Old English period. It was marked, as we have seen, by two impulses. The first was the poetic impulse of the north, yielding for its pagan product especially the great epic, *Beowulf*, and for its later Christian product such religious

*“The prince, especially when conspicuous in position and courage, was surrounded by a body of young men of rank who had committed themselves to his personal service. They were his companions, his thegns. As it was their highest aim to gain the first place in his retinue, so was it honorable for the lord to have a large following of gallant youths. In peace they added to his pomp; in war, they were a means of defence and a source of fame. It was their most sacred duty to guard his life in battle: nothing was deemed more disgraceful than to forsake the chief in time of need, nor to leave the field alive when he had fallen.”—BERNHARD TEN BRINK, on the institution known as the *Comitatus*.

poems as the paraphrases and hymns of Cædmon and Cynewulf. The second was the impulse which resulted in the building up of prose in the south by King Alfred and his co-laborers and successors. The latter was checked very much as the former. The defeat at Maldon was the forerunner of greater disasters which ended in the downfall of Æthelred the Unready and his West Saxon kingdom; and in 1016 Cnut the Dane declared himself king of the English realm. Literature did not wholly perish, for Cnut was wise and temperate, accounting himself both an English and a Christian king; and he even once composed certain famous verses telling how

"Merrily sang the monks of Ely
As Cnut the king rowed by."*

But literature passed into a long eclipse, to emerge again in neither the Northern nor the Southern dialect, but the Midland, and only after political revolutions had worked sweeping changes in the social conditions of the people and in the very character of the language itself.

* Merle sunge muneches binnen Ely.
Tha Cnut chyning ren ther by;
Roweth, crihtes, noer the land,
And here we thes muneches sang.



PART II

MIDDLE ENGLISH PERIOD

FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST TO
HENRY THE EIGHTH

1066-1509

CHAPTER III

TWELFTH CENTURY—EARLY NORMAN-FRENCH INFLUENCE

<i>Norman kings:</i>	<i>Arthurian Legends</i>	Abelard
William the Conqueror to	GEOFFREY OF	The Troubadours
Stephen 1066-1154	MONMOUTH	<i>The Cid</i>
<i>The first Plantagenets:</i>		<i>Nibelungenlied</i>
Henry II 1154-1189		
Richard I 1189-1199		
<i>The Crusades</i> 1095-1199		

It is unnecessary to pursue history through the reigns of the obscure Danish and English kings who succeeded Cnut. The next decisive event to which we come, an event from which we may date a new era in English society, language, and literature, is the Norman Conquest, begun in the year 1066 by the memorable battle of Hastings. When, at that battle, the English Harold fortified himself against the Norman invader on one of the low Sussex downs, he planted a banner embroidered with the design of a fighting man. The standard of the invading Duke William was a cross, blessed by the Pope, and the Duke's men advanced singing the French *Song of Roland*. The banner of the fighting man was swept away, and then and there, says Bernhard ten Brink, was the sunset in England of the ancient Teutonic hero-age, the dawning of the Romantic Middle Age.

For the coming of the Norman meant a new "graft," to use M. Jusserand's expression, upon the old English stock. It meant the infusion of a new spirit into the life of the race, and, possibly, precisely the spirit that was needed to redeem it from the somewhat stern, inflexible character it no doubt possessed. The Normans were already a mixed race. Certain raiding Scandinavians, "Northmen" like the English, had made their way into a corner of France—Normandy, it came to be called—

and established themselves there. They became amalgamated with the native Franks and Celts, until in time they were French tributaries, French in language, religion, and culture. And this amalgamation was transferred to England, to be further fused with the English race. Doubtless it was largely the fundamental affinity of the Normans with the English people that enabled William the Conqueror to unify England and establish, as he did, a kingdom which has remained to the present day untouched by further foreign conquest. Though he freely created barons of his Norman followers, he respected the English laws and customs, and half the people were disposed to accept him almost as a sovereign of their own race. He easily gathered about him an English army; he even tried to learn the English language; his son and successor, Henry, married an English woman; and it was not a great many years before the very name of Norman was practically forgotten.

At first, however, the French influence was strongly felt, and generally for good. A more distinctly feudal character was given to the government, in which power was nicely balanced between king and barons, with supreme authority still in the hands of the king. The spirit of chivalry crystallized in the great religious crusades, with their far-reaching results in the broadening of knowledge by contact with the southern civilizations of Europe and the enrichment of imagination with the color, splendor, and sacred mysteries of the East. English youths flocked to the University of Paris. French itself became the language of court and castle.

Under these conditions, the prevailing literature was naturally either in the Latin language, as were histories and ecclesiastical writings, or in Norman or Parisian French, as the *Song of Roland* and the *Song of Charlemagne*, which were brought over from France and remodelled by the court singers in England. With these in general we have nothing to do. But an exception must be made of one particular body of legend the influence of which has descended through the whole course

of English literature and seems to increase rather than diminish with time. This is the story of King Arthur.

The legend concerns not the English themselves, but the indigenous Britons; and the two men who at this early period had most to do with giving it currency came from the Welsh border, and were possibly of the old Briton stock. Tradition said that the race had been founded by a fugitive Roman consul, Brut, great-grandson of the Æneas who was fabled to have come to Rome from Troy, and the succession was traced through a long line of British kings. This tradition Geoffrey

*Arthurian
Legends.
Geoffrey of
Monmouth,
c. 1100-
1154.*

of Monmouth, a Welsh priest, made into a Latin *Historia Britonum*, or History of the Britons, about the year 1135. The history was at once denounced by sober historians as "a shameless lie," and Geoffrey himself could not have believed very much of it. But it made interesting reading, and was soon worked over into Welsh, English, and French. A free metrical version in French, the *Roman de Brut*, by the Jersey Norman, Wace, was especially popular, and the legend spread even to Germany and Italy. King Arthur in particular rose to the rank of a national hero and speedily became the centre of a large cycle of knightly tales. The ancient prophecies of Merlin; the stories of Tristran and of Launcelot of the Lake; and finally, even the Christian legend of the Quest of the Holy Grail, the cup with which Christ celebrated the Last Supper were woven in. This last addition is commonly attributed to Walter Map (c. 1137-1200), a poet of Welsh family at the court of Henry II., who, if the conjecture be correct, created the beautiful character of Sir Galahad. Thus was established a kind of national hero-saga, upon which in succeeding centuries some of the greatest English romancers and poets have delighted to exercise their finer fancy. We shall meet with it very soon again, nor shall we ever be long allowed to forget it, except perhaps through that "classical" eighteenth century when the romantic spirit seemed all but extinct.

CHAPTER IV

THIRTEENTH CENTURY—REVIVAL OF ENGLISH

<i>King John</i>	1199-1216	LAYAMON	Gottfried of Stras-
<i>Magna Charta</i>	1215	ORM	burg
<i>Henry III.</i>	1216-1272	<i>Cursor Mundi</i>	Prose <i>Edda</i>
<i>Edward I.</i>	1272-1307	<i>Romances</i>	<i>Aucassin et Nicolette</i>
		<i>Lyrics</i>	

With the close of the twelfth century passed the darkest period of the eclipse of native English literature, though a century and a half were yet to elapse before it emerged into anything like brilliance. The spoken language itself had at no time been imperilled. It pursued its own course among the people, scarcely touched by the new mode of court and castle. Some sort of vernacular literature was still kept alive. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, we have seen, came down to 1154; certain rhymed sayings, known as *Proverbs of King Alfred*, were current; and popular songs, of course, never ceased to thrive. Then, contemporaneously, as it happened, with the political separation from Normandy in 1204, and only ten years before John was forced to sign the Great Charter of English liberties, was composed a long and purely English poem of considerable interest and some artistic merit. This was the *Brut* of Layamon.

Layamon was a country priest. "There was a priest in the land who was named Layamon; he was son of Leovenath; may the Lord be gracious to him!" Thus he sings of himself in the opening of the *Brut*, and the few facts that he gives there are all that we know of him. The poem is an adaptation and extension of the Anglo-Norman *Brut* of Wace, before mentioned. It contains over 32,000 lines, or half-lines, much of the matter being of Layamon's

own addition, perhaps from Welsh legend. The account of the origin of the Round Table, for instance, and the story of the elves who took King Arthur to Avalon, appear here for the first time. In some respects, therefore, the poem is really imaginative poetry, and not merely a rhythmical chronicle. In form, it shows that the Old English alliterative scheme was gradually breaking down. Alliteration is observed, but somewhat irregularly; on the other hand there is a gain in accentual regularity, approaching to metre, and simple rhymes now and then occur. The language is English, with scarcely one French word in five hundred lines, but English, of course, of the transitional period, that is, Middle English, in which the old inflexional endings, grammatical gender, prefixes, and compounds are rapidly disappearing.*

Æfne þan worden
 Der com of se wenden
 Þat wes an sceort bat liðen
 Sceoven mid uðen,
 And twa wimmen ðer inne
 Wunderliche idihthe,
 And heo nomen Arður anan
 And aneouste hine uereden,
 And softe hine adun leiden,
 And forð gunnen hinen liðe.

"Even with the words
 There approached from the sea
 A short boat coming
 Floating on the waves,
 And two women therein
 Wondrously fashioned;
 And anon they took Arthur
 And quickly bore him,
 And softly laid him down,
 And forth they departed."

A religious poem of the same period, by the monk Orm, or Ormin, has a peculiar linguistic value, because the writer adopted the practice of doubling consonants whenever they followed a short vowel, giving us thus a clew to the pronunciation of his time.

The "Ormulum," c. 1215.

Þiss boc iss nemmedd Ormulum forþpi þatt Orm itt wrohhte.
 "This book is called the Ormulum because 'twas Orm composed it."

Here we find the old alliterative system largely given up, and the modern metrical system of evenly distributed stresses, though

*There are two versions of Layamon's *Brut*, the earlier in the Southern dialect, the later, about 1250, in the Midland. The extract is from the earlier.

without rhyme, practically established. The line has seven feet, which may readily be divided into two lines of four and three feet respectively. As a paraphrase of the Scriptures in homely English, the poem might have served a worthy purpose, could it have become widely known; but it is quite devoid of literary merit,—“the most edifying,” says Mr. Garnett, “the dullest, and in its original shape almost the biggest poem produced before the invention of printing.”

Yet other religious poems there were, in great variety—canticles and paraphrases, metrical homilies and lives of the saints. One in particular, the *Cursor Mundi*, “the *Cursor Mundi*,” best book of all, ‘The Course of the World’ men do it call,” is imposing by its great length and inclusiveness. It is written in the Northern dialect; the author is unknown. It attempts to recount the whole Bible narrative, and to give to it some of the color of romance by incorporating everything in the way of sacred or secular legend that will make for that end.

Far more interesting, are the tales and versified romances which the *Cursor Mundi* was meant to supplant, and with which the literature of the thirteenth century *Romances*. abounded. In the main these reveal French influence in subject, spirit, and form; that is to say, they rehearse the deeds of Charlemagne and his peers, or go back to Latin and Greek traditions of Alexander, etc.; they tend to be witty and lighthearted in tone; and they supplant alliteration with syllabic metre and rhyme. The octosyllabic couplet is a favorite measure. Not a few, however, deal with British subjects, and some of them must be of native origin. Such, in especial, are the romances, or sagas, of *King Horn* and *Havelok the Dane*. The latter, which appears to be an independent English development of an original which grew up in Anglo-Danish times, is an absorbingly interesting legend of the founding of the English town of Grimsby, and in its fresh and wild vigor takes us quite back to those times.

"In Humber Grim bigan to lende,
 In Lindeseye, rict at the north ende,
 Ther sat his ship up on the sond,
 But Grim it drou up to the lond.
 And there he made a litel cote,
 To him and to hise flote . . .
 So that hit Grimesbi calleth alle
 That ther-offe speken alle,
 And so shulen men callen it ay,
 Bituene this and domesday."

Minor lyric poetry is likely to be of obscure origin and uncertain date, the more so if it be in the nature of folk songs, which literary historians are often disposed to treat with scant courtesy. The Middle English period had such in abundance, though it is difficult to trace any survivals so far back as the precise time now under consideration. For instance, the "proud," "courteous," and withal "pious" Robin Hood lived, if he lived at all,* in the reign of Henry II., near the end of the twelfth century, and though the Robin Hood ballads as we now have them belong to a later stage of poetry and may not be treated here, they quite possibly derive from thirteenth century originals. That this outlaw with his misdeeds should have been idealized into a popular hero is only natural, since the condition of the times gave not a little excuse to those patriotic Englishmen who took refuge from a hard forest-law in secret or open outlawry. *The Owl and the Nightingale*, a poem of almost eighteen hundred lines in the Southern dialect, dates almost certainly from the reign of Henry III. It is written in romance couplets, yet without any traceable French origin. Its character, is as lyric as its form is didactic, and though it is a kind of moral debate between sobriety and gaiety, it betrays a loving observation of nature that has nothing to do with didactic purpose. A like spirit is betrayed in certain simple

* "Robin Hood is absolutely a creation of the ballad-muse."—*Cambridge Ballads*, ed. by G. L. Kittredge, p. 255.

little songs that have floated, unfathered, from about the same period down to the present day. Here is a stanza of one:—

“Sumer is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu!
Groweth sed, and bloweth med,
And springeth the wde nu.
Sing cuccu!”

Such an outburst annihilates the centuries with its revelation of the perennial human delight in nature's miracles.

CHAPTER V

FOURTEENTH CENTURY—AGE OF CHAUCER

<i>Edward II</i>	1307-1327	<i>The Green Knight,</i>	Dante
<i>Battle of Bannockburn</i>	1314	<i>etc.</i>	Petrarch
<i>Edward III</i>	1327-1377	MANDEVILLE	Boccaccio
<i>Hundred Years' War begins</i>	1338	WYCLIF	Froissart
<i>Battle of Crécy</i>	1346	LANGLAND	Hafiz
<i>Black Death</i>	1349	GOWER	
<i>Richard II</i>	1377-1399	CHAUCER	
<i>Gregory XI. denounces Wy-</i>			
<i>clif's Heresy</i>	1378		
<i>Wat Tyler's Insurrection</i>	1381		

The middle of the fourteenth century witnessed the conclusion, under Edward III., of the movement toward national freedom and unity which was begun at the time of the Great Charter, under John. The English spirit of independence was everywhere manifest. The voice of Parliament made itself heard above the "divine right" of kings. Foreign influence survived chiefly as an inheritance; with France itself there was long-continued war. Norman was become Englishman, and the English tongue was far on the way toward recovering complete ascendancy. English supplanted French in the law courts in 1362, "because the French tongue is much unknown." English was likewise heard in the pulpit and taught in the schools. It is eminently fitting that the time should have been made illustrious in literature by such names as Mandeville, Wyclif, Langland, Gower, and above all Chaucer.

But before we come to these names, we must glance at a little group of markedly English poems of the same century that possibly anticipates them. *Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight*, the first of the group, is one leaf of the flourishing tree of Arthurian romance. It relates how

a green-clad knight boastfully appears at Arthur's court, and, when his head is smitten off by Gawayne, picks up the head by the hair, charges Gawayne to meet him again within a twelve-month and a day, and rides off. The sequel of the story is full of interest, the moral is high, and the imagery and nature-painting not unworthy to be compared with *Beowulf*, though more consciously elaborated. The partly-rhymed stanzas in which the poem is written, revive too the Old English alliterative scheme. The dialect is West Midland. The other poems which have come to us in the same manuscript and the same dialect are *The Pearl*, *Cleanness*, and *Patience*. The two latter are alliterative religious poems. *The Pearl* is in stanzas, also with alliteration. It is a description of a father's vision of his lost daughter, his "pearl" (French, *marguerite*), to whom he was transported in a dream as he lay asleep on her grave. The mystic beauty of its descriptions, and its almost piercing pathos, have made it universally admired. We do not know who wrote these poems. If, as is commonly conjectured, one man was the author of all four, he deserves to be set by the side of Langland, excelled among fourteenth century poets only by Chaucer himself.

We are scarcely on more certain ground, so far as authorship goes, and certainly on less securely English ground, in dealing with the prose *Travels of Sir John Mandeville*. Whether there ever was a Sir John Mandeville, and if so, whether he travelled abroad or wrote the original account of his travels, which is in French, are unsettled and really not important questions. For a long time people believed that this English knight set out from St. Albans in the year 1322 and travelled for many years "thorgh manye dyverse londes, and many provynces, and kingdomes, and iles," and that he wrote out the story in Latin, French, and English. It is clear now that the English version is a translation from the French by another hand than the writer of the French,

"*The Green Knight*,"
 "The Pearl,"
 c. 1350.

"*Mandeville's Travels*," after
 1356.

and that while it assuredly belongs to the fourteenth century, our oldest manuscript extant is somewhat later than 1400; it is also clear that the book is largely a compilation from previous works, and that the author's careful distinctions of "These things I have seen with my own eyes," and "Men say, but I have not seen it," are merely clever artifices. But the English work is none the less a genuine little masterpiece, of enormous popularity in its day. Moreover, it is the oldest book of English prose that is not primarily historical or theological, but literary, that is to say, written and read for entertainment as well as instruction. For while the book is professedly a pilgrim's guide to the Holy Land, there is nothing the author so much enjoys as to escape from fact into the realm of fancy. Sir John is forever seeking "marvels"—the bird called Phoenix that rises from its own ashes, the "hippotaynes" that are half man and half horse, the people whose ears hang down to their knees, the apples of Paradise that have always in the middle the figure of the holy cross, the lake made of the tears of Adam and Eve who wept on a mount for a hundred years. The latter portion of the book is made up chiefly of wild stories of the realm of Prester John, fabulous emperor of India, and of the great Chan of Cathay. Everything is told, too, in such good faith, and with such zest, such unwearying assurance of "And you shall understand," and "There also you shall see," that the reader is constantly lured on, through fact and fiction, down to the year of grace 1356, when the old traveller's rheumatic gout, "against my will, God knoweth," fixed the end of his labors. The book needs only some modernization of spelling to be easily read to-day.

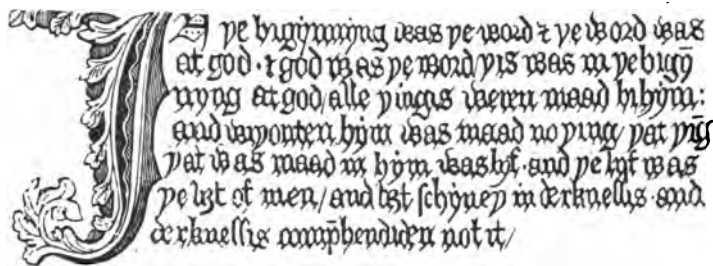
The other prose writer of first importance in this age, disregarding Chaucer, was John Wyclif. Wyclif was an Oxford scholar and a preacher, whose great service was the impetus he gave toward reformation a full century and a half before the Reformation itself. A considerable party in England, headed by John of Gaunt, was just then strongly opposing the policy of

the church of Rome, and by numerous tracts and sermons Wyclif both encouraged and supported Parliament in this opposition. He is best remembered in literature, how-

John Wyclif, c. 1324-1384.

ever, for his translation of the Bible. This itself was an outgrowth of his reformatory purposes, for he came to see that the surest way of establishing more

firmly the supreme authority of the Bible was to put the book into the hands of the people. The Old English versions were more or less fragmentary and practically obsolete. Accordingly, with the help of other scholars, he set to work, taking for his special portion the New Testament, and about the year 1380



Specimen from a Copy of Wyclif's Bible in the British Museum.

"In þe bigynnyng was þe word & þe word was at god. & god was þe word / þis was in þe bigynnyng at god / alle þingis weren maad bi hym: and wipouten hym was maad no þing / þat þing þat was maad in hym was lyf. and þe lyf was þe list of men / and list schyneþ in derkneffis. and derkneffis comprehendiden not it /"
—John i. 1-4.

the entire Bible could be read (of course in manuscript) in the current English tongue. As an example of literary style, Wyclif's handling of the language is creditable, nothing more,—his version is not to be compared with the great one that came several centuries later; but merely to take English prose, which had suffered a darker eclipse than poetry, and establish it as the vehicle of the Holy Scriptures, was to give it thenceforth unquestionable dignity and power.

Wyclif had a powerful contemporary, really a forerunner,

in the work of assisting the popular reaction against the corruption of the clergy and of creating a deeper and purer religious sentiment. This was William Langland, or Langley, of whom we know little beyond the fact that he wrote, in 1362, with several revisions and additions later, the long *Vision of Piers the Plowman*. The poem came at an opportune moment, just after a destructive storm which, raging over England, added, it seemed, one more warning calamity to the Black Death of a dozen years before, the long evils of the Hundred Years' war with France, and the double taxation by Pope and King. Perhaps it would be truer to say that the poem was an outcome, not of course of the storm, which was a minor incident, but of the woes that had gathered over the heads of the poor. It was an irrepressible cry from the depths of social darkness and misery. It is cast in the form of a dream and an allegory, in which this world is viewed as "a fair field full of folk" between the Tower of Truth on the one hand and the Dungeon of Darkness on the other, a field

"Of alle maner of men, the mene and the riche,
Worching and wondringe, as the world asketh."

Falsehood, Flattery, the Seven Deadly Sins, Reason, Conscience, Do-Well Do-Better, etc., all play their parts, under the guidance of Piers (Peter), the simple plowman, who is Truth, or Love, or Christ himself. Obscure in its details, the general drift of the allegory is clear enough, and it was copied and recopied for wide circulation. On its religious side it shows a puritanic intensity of hatred for the wrong and devotion to the right; on its literary side it is marked by passages of vivid portrayal, now of scenes from Scripture history, and now of everyday life in field or town. In metrical structure, it reveals little French influence, employing a revived and somewhat regulated form of the old Saxon alliterative, unrhymed verse. It is the last important English poem written in this measure.

John Gower was the author of three solid works,—a moral

poem in French, a political poem in Latin, and a narrative-didactic poem in English. This single fact, this phenomenon of a tri-lingual poet, like the tri-lingual *Mandeville's Travels*, speaks volumes for the literary conditions that still prevailed. Though the particular language which a work should be written in might be determined by its purpose, it is clear that there was much hesitation about entrusting any literary work to the language of the people alone. But between Gower's first work and his last, Chaucer had arisen, and Chaucer, as we shall see, court poet though he was, fortunately decided for the language of the people. And it was probably owing to Chaucer's example that Gower, well toward the end of the fourteenth century, wrote in English, though under a Latin title, his most important poem, the *Confessio Amantis* ("Lover's Confession"). The nearly twenty thousand octosyllabic couplets, composed

"in such a maner wise
Which may be wisdom to the wise,
And pley to hem that luste to pleye,"

contain numerous tales in illustration of the passion of love. These tales, of course, were meant to furnish the "play." But Gower was too old and garrulous, and of a wit too heavy, to compete with Chaucer in this vein. He might have done better had he kept more strictly to the business of attacking, like Langland, the Seven Deadly Sins. True, he had nothing like Langland's moral earnestness. The one thing in which he may be conceded a measure of mastery is his carefully studied art; for in mere verse craft, in smoothness of composition and painstaking construction, he could and did teach something. But Chaucer, thinking of his early works, addressed him in a dedication as "moral Gower;" and if we consider the underlying intention of his English poem, the moral Gower he may remain. Lowell intimates that he is to be read only as a penitential measure.

Mainly to the genius of Geoffrey Chaucer is due the distinc-

tion which the fourteenth century still possesses in the annals of English literature. That we are ignorant of the exact year of Chaucer's birth is one of those vexatious little uncertainties that often attend the biographies of great men, but 1340 is now accepted as approximately correct. We know that he was a son of a London vintner, or wine-seller, and that his youth was spent in the neighborhood of the great bridge over which travellers to and from the south of England were accustomed to pass. Our knowledge of the details of his life begins with his early manhood, when he was received as a page into the household of one of the royal princes and put in the way of preferment above the middle station of his birth. In 1359 he went with the army of Edward III. to France, where he was taken prisoner. The king was sufficiently interested in him to procure his ransom, and various promotions followed. He was made valet of the king's chamber, and later comptroller of the customs. The most important event of the active part of his career was a diplomatic mission (the second of several upon which he was employed abroad) which took him to Italy. He spent nearly the entire year of 1373 at Genoa, Pisa, and Florence, and obtained a knowledge of Italian manners and literature which had a strong influence upon his future work. For the rest, his life was that of a public officer and dependent upon royal patronage, prospering or not as the winds of favor blew, but faring well on the whole, with plenty of leisure, and daily allowances of a pitcher of wine or more substantial pensions in pounds and shillings. Indeed, he came into lands, was made a knight of the shire, and sat once in Parliament. Evidences of this semi-courtierly life are everywhere in his poems. The early *Book of the Duchesse* is a graceful tribute to the memory of Blanche, first wife of John of Gaunt, his especial patron and friend,—the "lady dere," who could

"daunce so comlyly,
Carole and singe so swetely,
Laughe and pleye so womanly,"

who had hair like gold, speech "goodly softe," and a heart "enclyned to alle gode." The later *Parlement of Foules*, in which a female eagle is wooed before an assembly of birds by three eagle suitors, one of them royal, is a joyous allegory of the betrothal of Anne of Bohemia to the young King Richard II. of England. And in almost the last year of his life, the poet addressed to the new sovereign, King Henry IV., a *Compleint to His Purse*, setting forth with pathetic humor how the lightness of that impoverished companion made him but heavy cheer.

"To you, my purse, and to non other wight
 Complayne I, for ye be my lady dere!
 I am so sory, now that ye be light;
 For certes, but ye make me hevy chere,
 Me were as leef be leyd up-on my bere;
 For whiche un-to your mercy thus I crye
 Beth hevy ageyn, or elles mot I dye!

"Now voucheth sauf this day, or hit be night,
 That I of you the blisful soun may here,
 Or see your colour lyk the sonne bright,
 That of yelownesse hadde never pere.
 Ye be my lyf, ye be myn hertes stere,
 Quene of comfort and of good companye:
 Beth hevy ageyn, or elles mot I dye!

"Now purs, that be to me my lyves light,
 And saveour, as down in this worlde here,
 Out of this toun help me through your might,
 Sin that ye wole nat been my tresorere;
 For I am shave as nye as any frere.
 But yit I pray un-to your curtesye:
 Beth hevy ageyn, or elles mot I dye!

Lenvoy.

"O conquerour of Brutes Albioun!
 Which that by lyne and free eleccioun
 Ben verray king, this song to you I sende;
 And ye, that mowen al our harm amende,
 Have minde up-on my supplicacioun!"

There are several portraits of Chaucer, one in particular

which we like to think of as genuine, drawn by a junior contemporary, Hoccleve, on the margin of a manuscript. This drawing shows an elderly man, in dark gown and hood, with drooping eyes and a benignant countenance. There is a passage, moreover, in which Chaucer professes to describe himself in the *Prologue to Sir Thopas*, as a small man with a generous waist, a fair face, and an "elvish," or absent, demeanor. The host says to him:

"Thou lokest as thou woldest finde an hare,
For ever up-on the ground I see thee stare."

This may or may not be. What we can certainly see behind the writings is a rare combination of a scholar and an observing man of the world, one modest and self-contained, enjoying books, enjoying nature, and enjoying the motley spectacle of human life in the streets of London or at the court of the king. He tells us himself, in the *House of Fame*, that he would often sit at a book as dumb as any stone, till his look was fairly dazed. But, in the *Prologue to the Legend of Good Women*, he farther says, that when the month of May was come, with its singing birds and springing flowers, then "Farewell my book and my devotion!" And we know that when he moved among men and women, his downcast eyes did not fail to see, with a twinkle of humor or a gleam of tenderness and pity, their countless shades of character and the diversity and perversity of their ways.

His work as a writer comprises both prose and poetry. The prose consists of two tales which he finally incorporated into the *Canterbury Tales*—the *Tale of Melibæus* and the *Persones Tale*; an unfinished treatise on *The Astrolabe*; and a translation of



GEOFFREY CHAUCER.
(From the Hoccleve MS.)

Boethius, which King Alfred had translated five hundred years before. The last is particularly interesting as showing that even in the lower field of prose Chaucer was easily the leader of all who had thus far held English worthy to be written. Portions of the original Latin treatise are in metre, and these Chaucer rendered in a semi-poetic style:

"O thou maker of the whele that bereth the sterres, which that art y-fastned to thy perdurable chayer, and tornest the hevene with a ravissing sweigh, and constreineest the sterres to suffren thy lawe. . . . Thou restreineest the day by shorter dwelling, in the tyme of colde winter that maketh the leves to falle. Thou dividest the swifte tydes of the night, whan the hote somer is comen. Thy might atempreth the variaunts sesons of the yere; so that Zephirus the deboneir wind bringeth aye in the leves that the wind that highte Boreas hath reft away; and the sedes that the sterre that highte Arcturus saw, ben waxen heye cornes whan the sterre Sirius eschaufeth hem."

Majestical and rhythmical prose like this was not within the compass of either Mandeville or Wyclif. Indeed, nothing to equal it was to be written for a century to come, and nothing to surpass it before the time of Hooker and Bacon.

Poetry, however, was the main occupation of Chaucer's life, and it is common to divide his work, according to the time of its production, into three periods. His earliest poems show plainly the influence of the French models which still found favor at court. He made a translation of the *Roman de la Rose*, a long romantic allegory of the preceding century, then the most widely known poem of western Europe, and a prolific source of inspiration to the late mediæval rhymers. There is no certainty that this translation has survived, but three existing fragments of an English translation of the romance are usually included among Chaucer's poems, and it is probable that the first at least is the work of his hand. The *Book of the Duchesse* composed, in the standard French form, the short couplet, as may be seen from the quotation, page 49, belongs also to the early period of his life. Besides these,

many of his short poems—*ballades*, *roundels*, and the like, written at various times—were determined in form by the revived troubadour poetry of France.*

After his eleven months' sojourn in Italy, French influence was supplemented, though not supplanted, by Italian. Without taking Dante, Petrarch, or Boccaccio as models, he none the less got from them further inspiration. The most important poems of this middle period are the *Parlement of Foules*, *Troilus and Criseyde*, the *Hous of Fame*, and the *Legend of Good Women*. The subject of the first of these, a comparatively short poem, has already been indicated. It, and *Troilus and Criseyde*, are written in a stanza-form which is always associated with Chaucer's name—a seven-line stanza, with rhymes arranged a b a b b c c, known as "rhyme-royal." *Troilus and Criseyde* is by far the longest of Chaucer's single poems, being composed in five books, each equal to two of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Despite its classical subject—it is a tale of the love of one of the Trojan heroes for a fair but faithless woman—the story is an invention of the middle ages. Chaucer obtained it directly from Boccaccio, but handled it with great freedom and with abundant touches of his own humor and pathos. Incidentally we may mention that the story has been a favorite one with English poets, Shakespeare and Dryden having written dramas on the same theme. The *Hous of Fame* is an unfinished allegory. Through his favorite device of a dream the poet represents himself as being carried by an eagle to a palace somewhere between earth and heaven, whither every spoken

*In the two centuries preceding, there had flourished among the troubadours of Provence, in the south of France, a species of highly artificial lyric poetry. Love-poems chiefly, and of the head rather than of the heart, they were often composed in marvellously intricate verse forms, making continual use of the refrain. In the fourteenth century, when the fashion had died out in the south, the same sort of thing sprang up in the north and was carried still further, largely supplanting the *gestes* and *romans* which the northern trouvères had long cultivated. One of the cultivators of these forms, Eustache Deschamps, who left "no less than 1175 *ballades*" besides other lyrics, was a friend of Chaucer and dedicated to him one of his *ballades*. The greatest French writer of this school was François Villon, in the succeeding century.

word, even the least whisper, flies, making there a sound that ever "rumbleth up and down," and where the words are, so to speak, reincarnated in the persons of those who spoke them on earth. In the *Legend of Good Women*, likewise unfinished, Chaucer set himself to make amends for the story of the false Cressida, by telling the stories of various women, Cleopatra, Thisbe, Dido, etc., "that been as true as ever was any steel." It is this legend,

"long ago
Sung by the morning star of song, who made
His music heard below,
Dan Chaucer, the first warbler,"

to which Tennyson so reverently acknowledges his debt in his own *Dream of Fair Women*.

Chaucer's third period includes his greatest work, the fruit of his maturest years and experience. All classical and foreign influences now having been assimilated by his thoroughly English temperament, he began, about 1386, to weave together one of the most delightful collections of metrical stories in any language. This is the famous *Canterbury Tales*. The plan of the poem is simple.

"Whan that Aprille with his shoures sote
The droghte of Marche hath perced to the rote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,
And smale fowles maken melodye,
That slepen al the night with open yë,
(So priketh hem nature in hir corages):
Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
(And palmers for to seken straunge strondes)
To ferne halwes, couthe in sondry londes;
And specially, from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,

The holy blisful martir for to seke,
That hem hath holpen, whan that they were seke."

Pilgrimages were a feature of the times. Few, however, even of the most zealous Christians, could undertake the long journey to the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem; most had to content themselves with visits to more accessible shrines. A favorite journey for Londoners was that to Canterbury, the capital of the old Saxon kings of Kent and, ever since the arrival of Augustine, the metropolis, or "mother city," of the English Church. Here Archbishop Thomas à Becket had been murdered in 1170 and



THE CANTERBURY PILGRIMS.

(Section from the Engraving by William Blake.)

straightway sainted, and miraculous cures were held to be worked at his grave. For three hundred years English men and women of every class thronged to this shrine, ostensibly from religious zeal, but often, no doubt, quite as much for the pleasure of a brief outing. The distance from London, which by present methods of travel may be covered in an hour, was sufficient for a two or three days' easy "canter," to use the phrase which has come down to us from the picturesque custom. Nothing was more natural than that a group of pilgrims should fall to telling stories by the way; and out of such a group and scene Chaucer formed the frame-work of his poem.

In Southwark, just across the bridge near which he was born, at the famous old Tabard Inn, now finally effaced by modern London, he set his company of nine and twenty sundry folk, including himself, on that April day. With their horses duly stabled, and supper served and eaten, the host is represented as proposing to them—"so merry a company" as he had not seen that year—that he join them on the morrow and that they each tell two tales both going and coming, the teller of the best to be given on their return a supper at the common expense. In this way the poem is opened, with abundant provision for long and varied entertainment. It was not carried to completion, for we get but twenty-four tales. But the unity of the plan is practically unbroken; the various interludes, which go by the name of "Prologues" to the tales succeeding, keep us in mind of the situation by marking the stages of the journey, and afford much interesting by-play between the host and his motley company.

So much of English life and character, so much of universal human interest, and so much of pure poetry, are comprehended in this poem of fifty poems that to come to an adequate appreciation of it is no easy matter. It is true, we do not require to be deeply versed in the history of the time. The poem is singularly free from allusions to the stirring events with which Chaucer was perhaps only too familiar—the Hundred Years' War, the Black Death, Wat Tyler's Rebellion. His pilgrims were glad enough, it may be, to forget these things in the absorbing interest of their grave or merry tales drawn out of the world's great common store of narrative. But the background of fourteenth century England is nevertheless here; and it is well to remember that it was the day when chivalry was in its final glories of extravagant dress and manners, when knights in armor on gaily caparisoned steeds were still ready to profess deeds of valor for outraged virtue's sake, if not always so ready to do them; the day when gunpowder had not yet supplanted the bow and arrow; the day of lingering faith in astrology and the black art; the day of increasing worldliness among monks

*Their
Matter.*

and clergy, and of the rapid rise of middle class trade and thrift. If we forget these things or do not know them, we shall not get into the spirit of Chaucer.

Moreover, it is one of the great virtues of this poem, which ignores actual men and events of its time, that it portrays in its numerous characters, as so many actual men and women, most of the important types of English society as it was then constituted. The company is well mixed. The church, properly enough, furnishes the largest number—a Monk, Nuns, Priests, a Friar, a Pardoner, a Summoner, even a poor Parson; the profession of arms is represented by a Knight and a Squire, the learned professions by a Clerk (scholar), a Physician, a Lawyer, and a Poet; there are also a Franklin (free-holder), a Merchant, a Shipman, a Wife, a Reeve, a Miller, a Cook, and a Plowman, together with a fraternity of mechanics and some minor personages. Only the titled nobility are not here; the company is rather too democratic for that.

But while some knowledge of the age is helpful in understanding these characters as types, none at all is needed to understand them as individuals. For Chaucer has the dramatic power which makes them, each and all, live. The *Prologue* to the *Tales* is a long gallery of portraits that seem to breathe and speak. We are charmed at once by the modest bearing of the Knight, lover of "trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie," who, just returned from his adventures in heathen lands, has so much to boast of and boasts not at all. We are amused at the Monk, with his bald head and shining face, no ghost, says Chaucer, but a lover of good fat swans and hares, and as devoted a huntsman as the countryside can show. Or mark the yellow-haired, trumpet-voiced Pardoner, straight from Rome with his spurious relics,—an old pillow-case masking as Our Lady's veil, and a glass of pigs' bones to coax money from the credulous. Look at the Shipman, reckoner of tides, familiar with all havens, brown-hued, with tempest-shaken beard, and hanging dagger; of conscience he "took no keep"; when he got the upper hand

of those he fought with, he sent them home "by water, to every land." Contrast with the bold Wife of Bath, who had travelled as far as Jerusalem and had led five husbands to the altar in her time, the archly simple Prioress, prattling her home-learned French, and ready to shed tears of pity for a bleeding mouse. Here is human nature in that infinite variety which custom cannot stale.

For the complete enjoyment of the tales, some study of their form is required. Chaucer was the first English poet to practice a wide variety of line and stanza forms. In particular, he was the first to employ continuously in English what has become the greatest instrument of our verse, the iambic pentameter, or five-stress line; and by using this in rhymed pairs, his favorite measure for the *Canterbury Tales*, he established our "heroic couplet." Now, to read this or any of his verse metrically, we need to be familiar with his pronunciation. For the Middle English of these poems is not quite so modern as it looks; lines that we read readily enough at sight would sound very strange to us from the poet's lips. In the matter of accent, for instance, there are two important points to observe: first, that final *e* coming at the end of a line (and elsewhere before a word beginning with any consonant except *h*), and final *ed* and *es* regularly, are pronounced as light syllables; and secondly, that many words, under French influence, take the stress, or a stress, on the last syllable. Thus we have *A-pril'-le with, ilk-e worthy, yong-e women* (but *droghte of, Marche hath*), *shour'-es, so'-te* (sweet), *ver-tu', li-cour', nature', con-di-ci-oun'*. Reading in this way we get the metre. But we must clearly go further and try to pronounce the words approximately as Chaucer would have pronounced them if we are to appreciate the full music of the lines. In this pronunciation, the vowels must be given the sounds they still commonly have in the continental languages; that is, long *a* must be sounded as *ah*, long *e* as *a*, long *i* as *e*, *ou* and *ow* as *oo*, etc. Radical changes will of course be wrought in many familiar

words, such as *shourès, bathed, flour, swetè, breeth, inspirèd, corage*; 'small' and 'tale' will be found rhyming (*smalè, talè*), 'you' and 'now' (*you, nou*) 'down' and 'lion' (*doun, le-oun*), 'cheer' and 'manner' (*cherè, manerè*). But if we are willing to practise the pronunciation till no sense of quaintness remains, the really rich harmonies of Chaucer's verse will fully emerge.*

Beyond the mere music of the verse, however, which not all who read Chaucer to-day will have the patience to study out, are other poetic virtues of easier reach and more potent appeal.

The stories themselves, which are perhaps in no case original, but gathered from a variety of sources, bear

*Wide Range
of Interest.*

always the hall-mark of the poet's genius. They are

selected to accord with the characters of the narrators, are freely remodelled for narrative effect, and are embellished with a hundred touches of native grace and humor. Humor, fresh and never failing, broad or delicate, is one of Chaucer's distinguishing qualities. It comes out chiefly in his perception of the caprices and frailties of human nature, and there is scarcely one of the band of pilgrims who does not receive some sly or open thrust at his idiosyncrasies. For instance, after the Man of Law has told his story, the Parson is called upon, but the Shipman interrupts with a mild oath and offers to tell a tale that "shall waken all this company." The jovial host himself only "spak of mirthe amonges othere thinges *Whan that we hadde maad our rekeninges* (paid our bills)." In the *Nonne Preestes Tale* the gallant Chauntecleer says to his wife, "*Mulier est hominis confusio*" ["Woman is man's torment"], and then the priest, mindful that the women in the party do not know Latin, graciously makes Chauntecleer translate the sentence: "Womman is

*The pronunciation of the first lines of the *Prologue* may be represented approximately thus:

Whan that A-pril-le with hise shuu-res soh-te
The droghte of March hath pair-sed to the roh-te,
And bah-thed eve-ry vaine in swich li-kuur,
Of which valr-tù en-gen-dred is the fluur.

For a simple treatment of Chaucer's pronunciation see Sweet's *Second Middle English Reader*, or G. Hempl's *Chaucer's Pronunciation*.

mannes joye and al his blis." There are tales, like that just cited (the old fable of Chanticleer and the Fox), the whole purpose of which is humorous or satirical. On the other hand there are not a few whose pathos and tenderness is moving to the last degree. "High seriousness," it is true, Matthew Arnold would deny to Chaucer; and he did not have it in the sense in which Dante and Shakespeare have it. It is on this side that his limitations are most apparent. But court poet though he was, removed from close contact with the poverty and oppression and sorrows and virtues of the people, his eyes and heart were not shut to them. Read the *Clerk's Tale* of the village maiden, Griselda, for a picture of virtue fostered among the lowly.

"But hye god som tyme senden can
His grace in-to a litel oxes stalle."

True, God's grace in the end takes the inadequate form of a nobleman's graciousness—a marquis makes Griselda his wife; and it is also true that the fickle people cheer the marquis in the very height of his cruel trial of her wifely patience and love. But the final lesson of the wickedness of a headstrong will, and the beauty of virtue and humility, comes surely home.

It would be impossible to give even a summary of the remaining merits of Chaucer's poetry, from the verbal felicity of many a single phrase to the final revelation of what a mediæval poet saw in life this side of the grave. One thing more, however, that is of particular interest to us who live after Burns and Wordsworth, will bear emphasis. This is the outdoor freshness that breathes through all his verse and keeps it perennially sweet. The little English daisy, white and red, is in one unforgettable passage* immortalized as the flower of all flowers, ever fair and fresh of hue; the moon shines down on the forsaken Ariadne as she climbs a rock in the early dawn to gaze after Theseus's vanishing barge†; Cressida, with unquiet heart, goes to sleep at last

* *Legend of Good Women*, Prologue, 40 ff.

† Same, VI., 309.

to the song of "a nightingale upon a cedar green."* "I repeat to myself a thousand times," says Lowell,

'Whan that Aprille with his shoures sote
The droghte of Marche hath perced to the rote,'

"and still at the thousandth time a breath of uncontaminate spring-tide seems to lift the hair upon my forehead." This is not the most essential thing in Chaucer, but it is a very vital thing, and whatsoever of his poetry the changing generations may like or mislike, this wholesomeness springing from the source of all human health will surely not fail of its appeal.

* *Troilus and Criseyde*, II., 918.

CHAPTER VI

FIFTEENTH CENTURY—PASSING OF THE MIDDLE AGE INTRODUCTION OF PRINTING

<i>Henries IV., V., VI.</i>	1399-1461	HOCCEVE	Joan of Arc
<i>Battle of Agincourt</i>	1415	LYDGATE	Villon
<i>James I. of Scotland</i>	1423-1436	<i>Ballads</i>	Gutenberg
<i>Wars of the Roses begun</i>	1455	<i>Miracle Plays</i>	Thomas à Kempis
<i>Edwards IV., V.</i>	1461-1483	<i>and Moralities</i>	Lorenzo de' Medici
<i>Caxton's Press in England</i>	1476	CAXTON	Savonarola
<i>Richard III.</i>	1483-1485	MALORY	Leonardo da Vinci
<i>Henry VII.</i>	1485-1509	DUNBAR	Columbus, Cabot.
<i>Discovery of America</i>	1492	SKELTON	Vasco da Gama
<i>Erasmus in England</i>	1497		

After Chaucer, mediæval England has little to offer to the student of literature that does not seem hopelessly tame. In intellectual and artistic sterility the fifteenth century might almost challenge comparison with the twelfth. Yet the record is not without a varied interest. Chaucer was never wholly forgotten; the undercurrent of popular verse, at no time stagnant, was then particularly strong; and the introduction of printing at the end of the century gave a powerful impulse to prose and was attended by a bright, if somewhat transient, gleam of poetry.

Among the immediate successors of Chaucer were two whose names are always recorded, though to the ordinary reader of to-day they remain only names. One was Thomas Hoccleve, or Occleve, who has been already mentioned as having probably drawn the portrait of Chaucer to be seen in Hoccleve's manuscript of *De Regimine Principum*, and who was among the sincerest mourners of Chaucer's death. "O master dear, my master!" he exclaims. He was a facile writer of rather indifferent poems and versified tales, mostly of a personal, gossipy

nature, but with a trend toward the didactic, especially in his later days of mingled regret for lost youth and repentance for the follies of it. The other was John Lydgate, a somewhat worldly Benedictine monk of Bury St. Edmunds, who was likewise a disciple and imitator of the unapproachable master. He composed a long *Troye Book*, inspired by the interest in that subject aroused by Chaucer's *Troilus*, and he frankly endeavored to continue the *Canterbury Tales* with a *Storie of Thebes*. His most popular book was the *Falles of Princes*. He was extremely versatile, writing at great length on all sorts of subjects, with the result that, in spite of his once considerable fame, many of his poems remain to this day unpublished.

After these men, the influence of Chaucer is hardly worth tracing until it won renewed strength with the introduction of printing. Meanwhile we may take note of several species of popular poetry that flourished in this otherwise obscure period. One is the ballad. Just how old our old ballads are, can seldom be determined. It is of course possible, as was noted in a previous chapter, that ballads of Robin Hood, for instance, appeared in the twelfth century, when that mythical outlaw was supposed to have lived. But we know that scarcely any ballads as we now have them can be dated earlier than the fifteenth century. Of course very few manuscripts or prints go back even that far. The earliest draft of *Chevy Chase*, which celebrates the battle of Otterburn (1388), may be very old. *Robin Hood and the Monk* is from a manuscript "of about 1450." A fragment of *A Gest of Robyn Hode* was printed possibly by 1489. The evidence merely points to the fifteenth century as a time of marked growth in the production of ballads, with the north of England and the Scottish border as their especial domain.

The virtue of these rude chants, whether local folk ballads, or the more ambitious productions sung by professional minstrels at merrymakings, or by town-pipers from door to door, lies in

their directness and simplicity. Figures of speech, or artifices of any kind beyond the unconscious art of climax, are uncommon. They go straight to their story; and the story, sometimes humorous, more often tragic, is usually tense with primitive human passion. It would be useless to try to select, from so great and varied a company, any one as best or even as representative. But for perfect lyric grace and sustained charm both of manner and matter the well known *Nut-Brown Maid* (first printed at Antwerp in 1502) may be safely instanced.

He. "It stondith so, a dede I do, wherfore moche harme shal growe,
My desteny is for to dey a shamful dethe, I trowe,
Or ellis to flee; the ton must bee, none other wey I knowe
But to withdrawe, as an outlaw, and take me to my bowe;
Wherfore adew, my owne hert trewe, none other rede I can,
For I must to the grene wode goo, alone, a bannysshed man."

She. "O Lorde, what is this worldis blisse, that chaungeth as the mone?

My somers day, in lusty may, is derked before the none;
I here you saye 'farwel'; nay, nay, we departe not soo sone;
Why say ye so, wheder wyl ye goo, alas! what have ye done?
Alle my welfare to sorow and care shulde chaunge, yf ye were gon;
For in my mynde, of all mankynde, I love but you alone."

(Stanzas 5 and 6.)

Another kind of popular literature flourishing in this period was the mediæval drama, in its several forms of Mysteries, or Miracle Plays,* and Moralities. Historically, though not intrinsically, these are of more importance than the ballads, both because they attach themselves more closely to the general literature of western Europe and be-

*The Latin and French distinction between Mysteries, as dealing with scenes directly from the Bible, and Miracle Plays, as dealing with legends of the lives of the saints, was not preserved in England, where Miracle Plays was the general term. But since the English Miracle Plays, as far as we know them, almost all correspond to the first definition, late scholars have often preferred to call them Mysteries. The distinction, on the other hand, between Miracle Plays and Moralities, in which latter the characters are mainly neither Biblical nor legendary, but personified abstractions, was, and is still, sharply made.

cause they play a special part in the rise of the drama in England. In the former aspect they cannot be discussed here. Suffice it to state that their beginnings in England must be sought in the time of early Norman-French influence, and that the earliest plays were Latin or French. It was not long, however, before they were composed and produced in English.

The origin of these plays, in whatever country, may be easily traced to the service of the Roman Catholic Church, with its wealth of symbolism and elaborate ceremony. The mere alternation of reading and singing is a dramatic feature of that service; while the stately processions of Christmas and Eastertide, with costumes and incense and chanting, are highly dramatic in effect. Naturally this obvious means of presenting vividly to an unlettered people the scenes of the Bible and enforcing its truths was made more and more of. An actual Christ-child was sometimes portrayed in the manger; the three Wise Men came out of the East; God himself, in a white coat and with gilded face, appeared on the stage. And as the spectacles grew in popularity, they were transferred from the church to the churchyard, and then to the village streets or green, where they were performed upon movable stages. They began to include whole cycles, or series, of Bible stories, one set covering the events from the Creation of the World and the Fall of Adam down to the Flood, another the Passion of Christ from the Last Supper and the Betrayal to the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. In England, as they passed out of the hands of the clergy, they were taken up by the town guilds, a kind of trades-unions, who made use of them to celebrate their regular festival days.

If we imagine for a moment any modern village community, school, or local organization, preparing a little play or cantata for public performance, we shall understand the situation. The success of one play leads to a repetition or to a second play, and a custom is soon established. This is precisely what took place, and the manuscripts of the plays, as they grew from year to year, came to be carefully preserved in the church or town archives.

Thus it happens that there have survived in England, besides scattered remnants, four more or less complete cycles of Miracle Plays: the York, the Wakefield (or Towneley); the Coventry, and the Chester collections. Nearly every town of importance must have had its collections. The oldest single play we have is *The Harrowing of Hell*, probably from early in the fourteenth century. The York cycle of forty-eight plays comes from the end of the same century. We know from a town clerk's record the exact order in which these were produced at York at the Corpus Christi festival in the year 1415, when the tanners presented the creation of the heavens and the fall of the angels, the plasterers the creation of earth, the shipwrights the building of the ark, and so on.

As the production of them passed out of church control, it was quite natural to extend the scope of the plays, and the composition of Moralities began. These are allegories *Moralities*. in which the characters are personified abstractions, representing some conflict between the various faculties and especially the virtues and vices of men, thus conveying a moral lesson. For instance, *The Castell of Perseverance*, an early Morality of the fifteenth century, reveals in its name very clearly its purpose. In another, called *Everyman*, which was extremely popular in the reign of Henry VIII., is presented the situation of a man—any man, every man—who is suddenly summoned by Death, and who, after making vain and pathetic appeal to such friends as Kindred, Goods, and Beauty, to accompany him, finally goes down into the grave attended only by the faithful Good-Deeds.

The metrical form of both Miracle Plays and Moralities is exceedingly various, with alliteration and rhyme, lines of all lengths, and stanzas of every device. Their literary merit is slight, and their chief interest for us lies, as was said above, in the light they throw on the development of the later English drama. Poetry was hardly to be served by adorning the simple Bible narratives. Take, as an example of the metrical quality,

and at the same time the rough humor and homely realism that often mark these plays, this "Good Gossippes Song" from *Noah's Flood*, of the Chester cycle:

"The flude comes fleetinge in full faste,
 One every syde that spreades full farre;
 For feare of drowninge I am agaste;
 Good gossipes, lett us drawe nere.
 And lett us drinke or we departe,
 For ofte tymes we have done soe;
 For att a droughte thou drinkes a quarte,
 And soc will I doe or I goe."

The Moralities, tolerable and even effective though they be as spectacles, make dull reading to an age that is impatient of allegories. Yet now and then the dulness is redeemed by a touch of poetic feeling, as when Everyman, on the way to death, makes his piteous complaint:

"O, to whome shall I make my mone
 For to go with me in that hevy journaye?
 Fyrst Felowshyp sayd he wolde with me gone;
 His wordes were very pleasaunt and gaye,
 But afterwarde he lefte me alone.
 Then spake I to my kynnesmen all in dyspayre,
 And also they gave me wordes fayre;
 They lacked no fayre spekyng,
 But all forsake me in the endyng!"

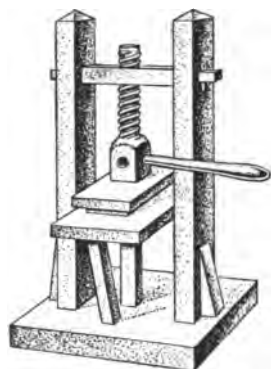
Sometimes, too, even the cold allegory grows warm in its vivid seizure of the facts of life, as when this same doomed Everyman is deserted, by Beauty, Strength, Discretion, even Five-Wits, one after the other, while Knowledge, in finely unconscious satire of the bold curiosity of philosophy and science, follows to the very verge of the grave, "Till I see where ye shall be come." The production of these plays continued quite to the time of Shakespeare, when they and their successors alike gave way before the great human Elizabethan drama.

England's outward history through the fifteenth century

had apparently little bearing upon her literature, unless, indeed the long Wars of the Roses, in the latter part of that period served to repress writing. Certainly it was many decades before these wars lent their color to drama and romance. Gutenberg's invention of printing, however, the great intellectual event of the century in Europe, was bound to be of the highest significance to so intellectual a nation. By good fortune a very intelligent English merchant, William Caxton, was for a long time at this period resident in Flanders, then a centre of wealth, commerce, and art. There, when about fifty years of age, becoming interested in a certain French book of Trojan legends, he translated it into English, and finding it in demand by the English residents of Flanders, he had it printed, assisting in the process himself. Thus his *Recuyell* (collection) of the *Historijes of Troye*, issued at Bruges about 1474, had the honor of being the first book printed in the English language. Then, in 1476, if our dates may be trusted, Caxton returned to London and set up a printing press in Westminster, near the Abbey, and the new power was established on English soil.

Caxton was an industrious translator, with some appreciation for real literature, especially on its romantic side, and with a fine faith in the capacities and possibilities of English prose. His final great service to English literature, however, lay not in any of his own numerous translations, but in the publication and consequent rescue from possible oblivion of the great English prose romance, the *Morte Darthur* ("The Death of Arthur"), by Sir Thomas Malory. In regard to the personality of

William
Caxton, c.
1422?-1491.



PRINTING PRESS.
Used by Gutenberg in 1450.

the author, there has been much speculation. Caxton simply tells us that he printed Malory's book, which Malory had taken "out of certain books of French"; and Malory tells us that he finished writing the book in the year 1470. At last it seems to be clearly proved* that he was a gentleman of that county which a century later gave us Shakespeare, and that he was a follower of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, dying in 1470, before his book was printed.

As for the book, it was largely a translation, and perhaps almost wholly a compilation, yet it proved to be by all odds the best comprehensive recital of the Arthurian stories in any tongue, and such it has remained, beyond possibility now of being ever superseded. For Malory not only gathered the confused mass of legends into a connected and consistent whole, perhaps a little tedious in length, yet endlessly fascinating in variety of lively episodes, but he also had the poetic feeling which transmutes his style to one quality with his golden matter. He writes a narrative prose that is unmatched, until Bunyan, for simplicity, directness, and force; and whenever there is occasion for scorn or pity or pathos, without any departure from the impersonal attitude of the true story-teller he sets down the unerring word or the full-charged phrase, and his sentences march in rhythmic tune. The very unity of the whole springs from a deep consciousness of the overhanging tragedy of Arthur's fate, whereby, after a life of glorious deeds, he sees his Round Table and his realm dissolved, and his own days close in darkness. Immeasurably sad is the story of the wounded king's passing, told with scarcely any more effort than the merest episode in the long chronicle:

"But I may not stand, my head works so. Ah, Sir Launcelot, said king Arthur, this day have I sore missed thee. Alas, that ever I was against thee, for now have I my death, whereof Sir Gawaine me warned in my dream. . . . Then Sir Bedivere wept for the death of his brother. Leave this mourning and weeping, said the king, for all this will not avail me; . . . but take thou Excalibur, my good

*Professor G. L. Kittredge: *Who was Sir Thomas Malory?*

sword, and go with it to yonder water side, and when thou comest there, I charge thee throw my sword in that water, and come again, and tell me what thou there seest. . . . Then Sir Bedivere departed, and went to the sword, and lightly took it up, and went to the water side, and there he bound the girdle about the hilts, and then he threw the sword as far into the water as he might, and there came an arm and an hand above the water, and met it, and caught it, and so shook it thrice and brandished, and then vanished away the hand with the sword in the water. So Sir Bedivere came again to the king, and told him what he saw. Alas, said the king, help me hence, for I dread me I have tarried over long. Then Sir Bedivere took the king upon his back, and so went with him to that water side. And when they were at the water side, even fast by the bank hove a little barge, with many fair ladies in it, and among them all was a queen, and all they had black hoods, and all they wept and shrieked when they saw king Arthur. Now put me into the barge, said the king: and so he did softly. . . . And so then they rowed from the land; and Sir Bedivere beheld all those ladies go from him. Then Sir Bedivere cried, Ah, my lord Arthur, what shall become of me now ye go from me, and leave me here alone among mine enemies. Comfort thyself, said the king, and do as well as thou mayest, for in me is no trust for to trust in. For I will into the vale of Avilion, to heal me of my grievous wound. And if thou hear never more of me, pray for my soul. But ever the queens and the ladies wept and shrieked, that it was pity to hear."

—(Strachey's edition, with modernized spelling.)

Tennyson himself, with all the resources of poetry and his own incomparable art, has not made this scene a whit more effective.

The book, compilation though it be, has proved in the fullest sense a literary source. It was periodically reprinted for over a hundred years; then, with the decline of interest in romance through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was neglected, to become again in the nineteenth century a living book. Thus it has ministered to the delight of widely separated generations of readers; and to such poets as Spenser, Dryden, Tennyson, Arnold, Morris, and Swinburne, has afforded both matter and inspiration.

Recurring now to poetry, we find at the turning of the century somewhat better conditions than had yet obtained since the

death of Chaucer. The fact that Chaucer's works were included among the ninety-nine books which the enterprising Caxton printed may have had something to do with this, but individual talent had more. Men like the Scotch Dunbar and the English Skelton had sufficient originality to stand on their own merits. At the same time, comparison with Chaucer in point of merit is still utterly out of the question and must be deferred for nearly another century.

Scotland, a separate kingdom, had developed a strong national feeling since the days of Wallace and Bruce, the heroes who had preserved her independence, and this national feeling had come to some obscure expression in long poems upon the deeds of those heroes. But in the period of which we now speak, the only period until very modern times when Scottish literature really entered into competition with that south of the river Tweed, this feeling was not, except in the folk ballads, very perceptible in Scotland's poetry. On the other hand, literary sympathy with England was strong. The Scotch literary dialect was itself an outgrowth of Northern English, and was not yet called Scotch. In spite of its differences, it was felt to belong to the same language as the London, or Midland, English which from Chaucer's time was the standard language of England. Moreover, Chaucer was held in especial esteem by the Scottish writers. King James I. himself wrote a poem (*The Kingis Quair*, "King's Book," c. 1423) in the "rhyme royal" of Chaucer, perhaps thus giving origin to the name. Scottish poetry, therefore, of the fifteenth century scarcely differs from English in national feeling, but only; first, in dialect, and second, in a more marked reflection of French influence through Chaucerian tradition and through the closer political relations of Scotland with France.

Of the four Scotch poets who might claim attention—James I. at the beginning of the century, Robert Henryson in the middle, William Dunbar and Gawin Douglas at the end—Dunbar is best remembered. He was attached to the court of

James IV., and was in London with the embassy that in 1501 arranged the marriage between Henry VII.'s daughter

Margaret and the Scottish King. "London! thou art the flower of cities all," he exclaims in a poem eloquent with delight. Two years later, when the marriage was consummated, his *Thistle and the Rose* (*The Thrissill and the Rois*) celebrated the union in rhyme royal. As its title shows, it is allegorical, in full conformity with the French taste. It is also pretty directly imitative of Chaucer:—

"Quhen Merche wes with variand windis past,
And Appryl had, with her silver schouris,
Tane leif at Nature with ane orient blast,
And lusty May, that muddir is of flouris,
Had maid the birdis to begyn thair houris
Among the tendir odouris reid and quhyt,
Quhois armony to heir it wes delyt," etc.

At the same time, it shows a genuine love of nature, one of the constant merits of the Scottish school. In the debate of *The Merle and the Nightingale*, a poem of excellent workmanship and rare sweetness, an alternate refrain impressively iterates the religious lesson that "All love is lost but upon God alone." In *The Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins* (1507), satire and buffoonery join unsparing hands. Thus, on various counts, Dunbar deserves his position as the early laureate of Scotland.

If we pass over the uneven and prolix allegorist, Stephen Hawes, there is but one name in England to match that of Dunbar's in the North during this short-lived poetic revival. John Skelton was a tutor of Prince Henry, afterward Henry VIII., and a churchman till the time when he fell out of the favor of Cardinal Wolsey. As a poet, he began in the French-Chaucerian manner, but he possessed little gift for musical lines, and his genuine poetic genius had to find vent in an original and rugged verse, rhymed, alliterated, or what not, a doggerel to this day called

John Skelton, c. 1460–1529.

"Skeltonic," in which he soars and sings, or as Mr. Saintsbury puts it, "crows and whoops," by turns.

"Though my ryme be ragged,
Tattered and jagged,
Rudely rayne beaten,
Rusty and moughte eaten;
If ye take well therwith,
It hath in it some pyth."

His fierce satire, the matter suiting the manner, was commonly directed against his brother clergymen. Most poetical perhaps of his more lyrical attempts is *The Boke of Phyllyp Sparowe*, a lady's alternately pathetic and burlesque lament for the death of a pet bird. Only, however, in occasional passages, like the one in this lament beginning "I took my sampler once," or in the merest snatches like

"Mirry Margaret,
As mydsomer flowre,
Jentill as fawcoun
Or hawke of the towere,"

does Skelton rise into the free air of poetry. On England the Muse that Chaucer knew still looked disdainful.

PART III

MODERN ENGLISH PERIOD

FROM HENRY THE EIGHTH TO THE RESTORATION
MORE AND TYNDALE TO MILTON

1509-1660

ALREADY in Chaucer's life and for a century and more after his death, forces were at work which were to change the character of civilization in all southern and western Europe, bringing to an end the middle ages, as we term them, and ushering in the modern world. Three things had characterized mediæval life—feudalism, scholasticism, and the domination of the Church; and one after another these things were destined to pass. The military institution of feudalism, which rested upon the superior power of the mounted mail-clad knight and kept the masses in subjection, received its deathblow at Crecy in 1346, when the English yeomen under Edward III. proved that horses and armor were no match for their long-bows. Scholasticism which, under the guidance of theology, narrowed intellectual interests to a barren logic and philosophy, disappeared before a wave of broader humanism. In Italy the revival of learning, led by Petrarch and Boccaccio, had introduced the change, and at the period at which we have now arrived this Renaissance, or new birth, was at its height, with the Medici ruling in Florence and fostering the art and literature that flowered in the creations of men like Raphael and Michelangelo. In every direction the thoughts of people were widened. From Constantinople, captured by the Turks in 1453, Greek scholars fled, bringing with them to western Europe their precious manuscripts. Traders penetrated constantly farther eastward. Portuguese mariners, doubling the Cape of Good Hope, found a waterway to India. Columbus, seeking another route thither, found a new world. Copernicus traced the path of the earth itself on the map of the universe. Printing was invented, and the revived classical poetry and philosophy, together with the new literature, the records of travel, and the discoveries of science, were multiplied and scattered broadcast, bringing nation into touch with nation and age with age. Finally,

Luther reanimated the heresies of Wyclif, and religious new thought was added to new art, new letters, new knowledge, new hopes, and new dreams.

What all this meant to letters, how it broadened and humanized them, may be imagined. It meant that a drama was once more possible which should be as wide as life and as deep as the springs of its passions. It meant that poetry should become the full voice of the joys and aspirations of the individual, the expression of his delight in the world of reality no less than of vision. It meant that prose itself should burst its monastic bonds and grapple with questions of universal interest, with the exploration of the physical world, with the government of states, with the purposes and progress of the arts, with the regulation of domestic and private life for material comfort and well-being.

England shared in these fresh impulses, but, it must be confessed, somewhat tardily, and for a long time without giving them adequate expression in her literature. In that respect her greatness was only preparing. When in 1400 her poet-spokesman of the Middle Age was laid to rest in Westminster Abbey, there were many found to do him honor but none to wear his robes. Chaucer was simply the master, whom scholars and readers looked back to in loving remembrance. He had settled, beyond the possibility of further question, that the language which the people of London used in the transaction of their business could be made to sing their joys and sorrows no less perfectly than French or Italian, Latin or Greek. But poetic genius was lacking, and for nearly a century, as we have seen, English letters passed again into a state of semi-darkness. Then came a stir that betokened dawn, though more than half a century was still to elapse before the Elizabethan day. Through this period, however, modern English was steadily emerging.

HENRY VIII. TO ELIZABETH—THE NEW LEARNING
THE REFORMATION
1509-1558

<i>Henry VIII</i>	1508-1547	MORE	Machiavelli,
<i>Fall of Wolsey</i>	1529	TYNDALE	Ariosto
<i>Papal Supremacy abolished</i>	1534	LATIMER	Michelangelo,
<i>Suppression of Monasteries</i>		ASCHAM	Raphael, Titian
.....	1536-1539	WYATT	Erasmus
<i>Edward VI</i>	1547-1553	SURREY	Copernicus
<i>Mary</i>	1553-1558		Luther, Calvin
			Rabelais

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Reformation in England. But the change was not made without violent disturbances, both political and religious, and the very forces that were to make English nationality and literature great delayed for a season the realization of that end. At no time, for instance, in the history of England had there been such a wholesale destruction of books as took place in the troubles at the end of Henry's reign, when, among hundreds of others, the great libraries of London and Oxford totally disappeared.

So far as literature is concerned, the tendencies and activities of the time may be briefly described. In the first place, the new ideas and ideals concerning the organization of society found admirable expression in a book that has been ever since regarded as a classic. This is the *Utopia* (1516) of Sir Thomas More, perhaps the foremost Englishman of his day, a man who paid in the end with his life for his steadfast devotion to his principles. As the *Utopia*, however, was written in Latin and was not translated for many years, its bearing upon English literature is but an indirect one. In the second place, the printing press continued to encourage English prose writing and prose translation. Especially noteworthy is the translation of the French *Froissart* by Lord Berners (1523), which afforded lovers of romance scarcely less entertaining reading in genuine history than they could get in Caxton's stories of Troy or Malory's stories of the Knights of the Round Table. In the third place, great zeal was manifested in the translation and printing of the Bible, which scholars were now able to translate, not as formerly from the Latin Vulgate, but directly from the Greek and Hebrew. William Tyndale's version of the *New Testament*, which has had such a profound influence upon English style, appeared in 1534, and Miles Coverdale's *Bible* in 1535; and in 1539 a revision of the two, known as "The Great Bible," was authorized by Henry VIII. In 1548 followed the *English Prayer Book*, edited by Archbishop Cranmer. The press also served to circulate and to preserve some of the *Sermons* of Hugh

More,
Berners,
Tyndale,
Latimer.

Latimer, bishop and preacher to the king, and a master of vigorous English.

Naturally this accumulation of printed prose was giving the language a stability it had never yet possessed. Moreover, the Midland dialect of Wyclif and Chaucer, standardized and nationalized, especially through the Bible, was now become practically the modern English we all know. With the disappearance of final *e* from pronunciation went almost the last trace of Middle English inflection; and though the vowels were still, and for a long time to come, doubtless, pronounced more after the old way, the English as written was modern English, and there is no sufficient reason why we should attempt to pronounce it otherwise than as we do to-day.* The vocabulary, too, had begun to expand after the liberal fashion that marks it still, drawing freely on every source that could serve its needs. Such expansion, indeed, was not only facilitated by the multiplying of translations from languages both ancient and modern, but was actually compelled by the inpouring of new interests and ideas.†

Further, a critical tendency was beginning to manifest itself, and there was a direct and conscious attempt to improve and control the language for literary purposes. Philology and composition were discussed, and Rhetorics written. Conspicuous among men of this critical and pedagogical bent was a Cambridge professor, and tutor of the young Princess Elizabeth, Roger Ascham, whose written prose possessed real distinction. His jealousy for the honor of the English tongue was shown in his *Toxophilus* (1545), a book on archery dedicated to Henry VIII., which he refused to write in Latin or Greek, proud to present his "Englishe matter

Roger
Ascham,
1515-1568.

*The spelling of extracts used henceforth in the present book will be modernized, except in the case of Spenser, who was intentionally archaic, and in a very few other instances.

† Tyndale's Bible, for instance, as compared with Wyclif's, gives evidence of this expansion in such innovations as *superscription* for *writing above*, *tribute* for *rent*, *physician* for *leech*, *congregation* for *church*, *doctrine* for *teaching*, *iniquity* for *wickedness*, *eternal* for *everlasting*, *provoked to anger* for *stirred to wrath*. See Appendix.

in the Englishe tongue for Englishe men." His *Scholemaster* (1570), a treatise on the discipline of youth, on teaching Latin, and on versification, was not published till after his death. It is remarkable for its advanced views on education, both in counseling that appeals should be made rather to the pupil's interest than to his fear of a flogging, and in substituting a general culture of the mind and body for the mechanical instillation of lifeless rules.

Finally, in the field of poetry, an influence began now to be dominant which was to play a part in the shaping of the literature down to the end of the century. This was the influence of Italian writers, with the classical standards behind them. Just why that influence, which Chaucer had felt so long before and certainly to the great enrichment of his own work, should have failed to spread earlier, is not easy to say. Perhaps the lack of printing was a prime reason. Perhaps also the native resistance was too strong, or the native obtuseness too great, for there were not wanting those who regretted the foreign influence, as tending to retard native literature. But continental literature and thought were far ahead of the English, and fresh draughts from that source could not but be invigorating. Moreover, such attempts at a strictly native expression as Skelton's had not been encouraging; it is clear that in the matter of form English writers needed further foreign schooling, before Spenser and Shakespeare were possible. The two poets entitled to most of whatever credit is due for the introduction of Italian and classical models were Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey.

Thomas Wyatt, a Cambridge Master of Arts at seventeen, knighted at thirty-four, and dead before forty, led the typical life of a courtier of the time, one year in disfavor and in prison, and another year on active embassies for the king. Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, a friend and poetic pupil of Wyatt's, led an idle but honorable and lamentably brief life at court, being beheaded on a foolish charge of treason in his thirtieth year, only nine days before

*Thomas
Wyatt,
1503?-1542.*

the king's own death. The fruits of these two men's literary activity are best considered together. They were published, though not until just before Elizabeth's accession, *Earl of Surrey, c. 1517-1547.* in a collection of verse called *Tottel's Miscellany*, 1557, a book and a date, which, it should be borne in mind, publicly open the new era in English poetry. The contributions of the two consist, on Wyatt's part, of love lyrics in sonnet and various stanza forms, and satires; on Surrey's, of similar sonnets and lyrics, and a translation of two books of Virgil's *Æneid*.

The love poems, personal in tone, and often composed serially, constituting a kind of diary of love, either real or fictitious, were something new in English literature and set a fashion that lasted through and long after Elizabeth's reign. The model was obtained from Italy, where both men had travelled and studied poetry. "The Lover Describeth his Restless State," "The Lover Praiseth the Beauty of his Lady's Hand," "The Lover Curseth the Time when first he Fell in Love,"—such are the themes upon which the amatory changes are rung. The fashion is particularly interesting to us because it brought with it the fourteen-line sonnet, which of all borrowed forms has taken most kindly to English conditions, yielding some of our very greatest poetry. The sonnet-form, however, was not conquered without a struggle. Chaucer's mastery of the ten-syllable (or five-foot) line seems not to have assisted Wyatt, who labored at a translation of one of Petrarch's sonnets after this fashion:

"The long | love that | in my | thought I | harbér
And in | my heart | doth keep | his re | sidence,
Into | my face | presseth | with bold | pretence,
And there | campeth | display | ing his | bannér," etc.

This is very literally a "sad mechanic exercise." Surrey's attempt at the same sonnet reveals great metrical improvement, though he takes liberties with the rhyme order:

'Love, that liveth and reigneth in my thought,
That built his seat within my captive breast;

Clad in the arms wherein with me he fought,
Oft in my face he doth his banner rest," etc.

Either is very far from the mellifluous numbers of Shakespeare or even of Sidney, but the lesson had to be learned at somebody's cost. Surrey at his best, it should be said, considerably improves upon the above lines.

More important still was a second feat in pioneering, the glory of which belongs to Surrey alone. This was his use of the iambic five-foot unrhymed verse—blank verse—in his translation of the *Æneid*. It may seem a small thing for him to have taken the ordinary five-foot line which he was using in his sonnets, and which Chaucer had already proved the virtues of in couplets and otherwise, and simply omit the rhyme. But it was no small thing to throw away thus every musical device but metre and still achieve poetry. Surrey did not always do the latter.

"Aurora now from Titan's purple bed
With new daylight had overspread the earth;
When by her windows the Queen the peeping day
Espied, and navy with 'splay'd sails depart
The shore, and eke the port of vessels void,"—

these are not the sort of lines we are used to now. But the beginning was made. The instrument was rudely forged which in fifty years was to be shaped into the very greatest instrument of English poetry and wielded by the greatest poet of all time.

INTERCHAPTER

THE ELIZABETHAN AGE

AGE OF SPENSER, SHAKESPEARE, AND BACON

1558-1625

Elizabeth queen..... 1558-1603
Act of Supremacy 1559
Colony of Virginia (Raleigh) 1585
*Execution of Mary Queen
of Scots* 1587
*Defeat of the Spanish Ar-
mada* 1588
James I. 1603-1625
Gunpowder Plot 1605
Colony at Jamestown 1607
*Pilgrim Fathers in New Eng-
land* 1620

SPENSER
SIDNEY
MARLOWE
SHAKESPEARE
JONSON
BEAUMONT AND
FLETCHER
WEBSTER
LYLY
HOOKER
BACON
BURTON
KING JAMES BIBLE

William of Orange
Philip II. of Spain
Mercator
Galileo
Kepler
Tasso
Montaigne
Cervantes
Lope de Vega
Rubens

The brief Roman Catholic reaction under Mary, with its three hundred victims sent to the stake, among them Latimer and Cranmer, was more calamitous than the Protestant misrule of Henry's latter years, and when Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558, England's affairs were in a sad condition. Elizabeth, however, was precisely the woman to steer the middle course through which alone lay the way to safety and peace. Her sympathies were neither with Rome, nor with the extreme reformers, soon to be known as Puritans, who would have abolished every trace of Catholicism in their worship. In a liberal spirit, slowly but surely, she worked her reforms, and when, thirty years later, the ambitious Philip II. of Spain was defeated with the loss of his Armada, the Protestant faith was finally and securely established in England by the same blow which determined the political greatness of the nation.

It is difficult for historians to record dispassionately the glories of Elizabeth's long reign, an age that justly challenges comparison with the age of Pericles in Greece, of Augustus in Rome, or of the De' Medici in Florence. It was then that the full effects of the Renaissance and the Reformation were at length felt in the island kingdom. All classes of people were seized with a noble restlessness and curiosity which were the precursors of great achievements. Venturesome mariners like Drake, and traders like Jenkinson, explored the farthest corners of the earth and brought back wealth and tales of wonder from Muscovy, China, and Peru. Statesmen like Burleigh fostered prosperity at home. Courtiers like Sidney and Raleigh added the graces of culture to the virtues of bravery and made Elizabeth's court as resplendent as it was powerful. Queen Elizabeth herself was a mistress of nearly every polite accomplishment from Greek and Italian to dancing and archery, loved study, loved music, loved pageants and pastimes, and assisted in all ways in the re-quickening of life that was going on about her. Finally, poets and philosophers were not wanting with the genius to respond to the spirit of the age, to reflect its temper and minister to its ideals. There were Spenser, Shakespeare, Bacon, and Jonson, any one of whom would have made the age illustrious, besides many others so richly endowed that only the greatness of these four has overshadowed their names.

It will be noted that the Elizabethan Age, as defined in literature, does not exactly coincide with Elizabeth's reign. Some twenty years from the time of her accession must be regarded as still preliminary, and then some twenty years must be allowed after her death before the generation headed by the mighty four had spent its force. The new poetry, we have seen, was actually introduced in 1557 by the publication of *Tottel's Miscellany*, which contained especially numerous specimens of both Wyatt's and Surrey's verse; but though it proved highly popular with readers it did not at once stimulate any productions of importance. Perhaps only Thomas Sackville, Lord Buck-



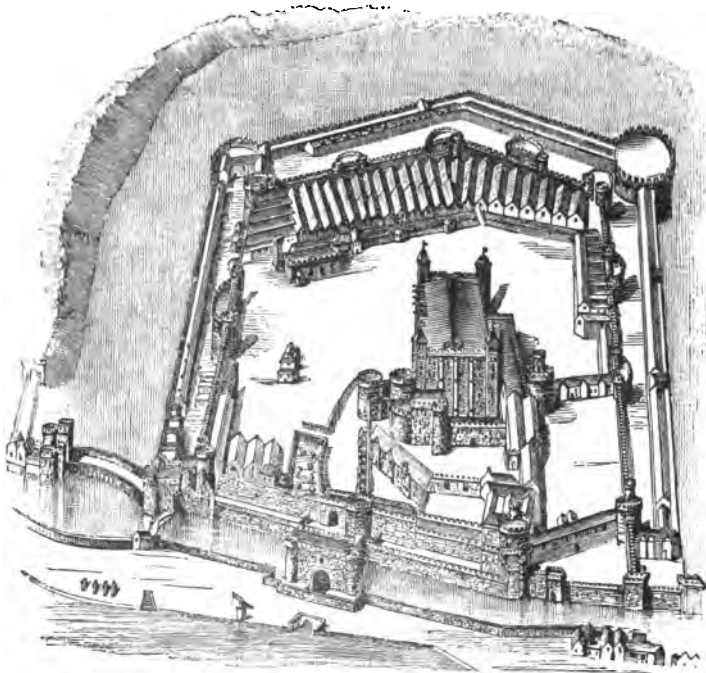
BEN JONSON
EDMUND SPENSER

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
FRANCIS BACON

hurst, showed in these first years noteworthy individuality; and his stately and solemn *Induction* (1563), in rhyme royal, with its vision of the realms of the dead,—

“The large great kingdoms, and the dreadful reign
Of Pluto in his throne where he did dwell,
The wide waste places, and the hugy plain,”—

recalls Lydgate almost as much as it anticipates Spenser. But production was not suspended. John Foxe's great *Book of Martyrs* (printed in English, in 1563) fixed the terrible lessons of Mary's reign; translations from the classics multiplied; masques and little plays for the queen's progresses and other ceremonials were written; tales, translated from the Italian and published in collections, like William Painter's *Palace of Pleasure* (1566), became extremely popular; and the affected verses of the swarm of minor poets were gathered into further miscellaneous collections, such as the *Paradise of Dainty Devices* in 1576. Then, in 1579, with the appearance of Spenser's *Shepheardes Calender* the great age was fairly begun.



THE TOWER OF LONDON IN 1597.

This ancient fortress, standing on the north bank of the Thames, was much used as a royal residence before the time of Elizabeth and was the scene of some of the most important events in English history—the murder, for instance, of the infant King Edward V. and his younger brother Richard. Elizabeth was once confined here. Sir Walter Raleigh went from here to his execution in Old Palace Yard, Westminster. Wyatt, Surrey, Latimer, Bacon, and other distinguished authors were at various times confined within its precincts.

CHAPTER VIII

ELIZABETHAN POETRY

SPENSER SIDNEY THE SONNETEERS

Edmund Spenser is to be regarded as one of the courtier group who surrounded Elizabeth, though he spent much of his life out of England. The precise kind of preferment and patronage which his talents should have won for him never came. He was born, probably in 1552, in eastern London, in sight equally of green fields and of the ancient castellated Tower. From a grammar school he went to Cambridge, where he partly worked his way, taking the master's degree after seven years' residence. Shortly after this, on a visit to the north, he seems to have been captivated by the charms of one "Rosalind," whose indifference inspired some of the plaintive verses of the *Shepheardes Calender*. The publication of this in 1579 was the beginning of his career as a poet. About the same time he became an inmate of the great house of Leicester, and a friend of Leicester's nephew, Sir Philip Sidney. Thenceforward, whether for good or bad, his life was to be spent almost entirely in the turbulent country of Ireland, whither he went as a secretary of the Lord-Deputy. He was granted the estate of Kilcolman Castle, married an Irish lady, whose name, Elizabeth, he has celebrated in one of his sonnets together with his mother's and his queen's, and settled down to a life of semi-banishment, relieved only by several journeys to London, or by the occasional visit of a friend like Sir Walter Raleigh. In 1598 Ireland was in open rebellion; Kilcolman was burned, and Spenser had to flee with his family to London, where he died at the beginning of the following year.

The *Shepherd's Calender* is scarcely in itself a great poem, but besides its promise of the very great poetry soon to be, it contained some fulfilment of the promise that for more than twenty years had already been. Colin Clout, the shepherd's boy of the January Eclogue, 1579.

"When winters wastfull spight was almost spent,
All in a sunshine day, as did befall,
Led forth his flocke that had bene long y-pent,"

was unconsciously emblematic of Spenser himself leading forth to the sunshine these firstlings of the new poetry. There are twelve Eclogues, or pastoral poems, in the "calender," one for each month of the year. Ten are in the form of dialogues, in which shepherds, lounging in sun or shade, discuss love or politics, or hold singing matches after the fashion of the shepherds in Virgil and Theocritus. The rustic background is genuine and interesting, and though the songs and satire sound artificial on the lips of "Hobbinol" and "Piers," they are in themselves the genuine work of a poet happy to find any excuse for the exercise of his gift. Their freshness and melody, the variety of themes which they display, and the mastery over a wide range of forms, from rugged, clownish verse to the most difficult of intricately rhymed stanzas, mark them off from anything that had been seen since the days of Chaucer. Afterward Spenser attained his highest lyrical reach in two hymns, the *Epithalamion* (written for his own marriage) and the *Prothalamion*, which contend with each other for the honor of being the noblest marriage hymns in any literature.

"Come now, ye damzels, daughters of delight,
Helpe quickly her to dight:
But first come ye fayre Houres, which were begot
In Joves sweet paradise of Day and Night; . . .
And ye three handmayds of the Cyprian Queene,
The which doe still adorne her beauties pride,
Helpe to adorne my beautifullest bride."

And, as ye her array, still throw betweene
 Some graces to be scene;
 And, as ye use to Venus, to her sing,
 The whiles the woods shal answer, and your eccho ring."
 (*Epithalamion*, Stanza 6.)

These products, however, are minor as compared with the very great one which is now almost synonymous with Spenser's name. The *Faërie Queene* is one of those works that could scarcely have come out of any age but the Elizabethan. Spenser had been revolving the idea of it for several years, and after he was established in Ireland he took up the congenial task of composition. He was by nature a lover of pomp and splendor and a dreamer upon the romantic deeds of bygone days; he admired courage and hated cowardice; he loved beauty and nobility of character no less than beauty of physical form; his imagination, too, was filled with pictures in which these abstractions seemed almost real, and his facility for metre and rhyme prompted poetic expression. Accordingly, with the models of the great Italian romantic epics before him, Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* and Tasso's lately published *Jerusalem Delivered*, he planned an intricate tale of chivalry in which he might give a like full play to his fancy and embody his loftier ideals of beauty and truth.

When three Books, of twelve Cantos each, were finished, Raleigh saw the poem and urged him to take it to London and the queen. The result was that this portion was published in 1590 with a fitting dedication "To the most mightie and magnificent Empresse Elizabeth." There were to have been twelve Books in all—indeed, Spenser even contemplated twenty-four—but only three more were completed, and the six were published together six years later, making a volume of nearly twice the bulk of the *Canterbury Tales*. The whole poem was planned with allegorical intent, to set forth the twelve moral virtues, for which the Books are respectively named. Thus the Knight of the Red Cross represents Holiness; Sir Guyon, Temperance; Britomart,

Chastity; Cambel and Triamond, Friendship; Artegal, Justice; and Sir Calidore, Courtesy. Each Knight performs deeds in vindication of his special virtue and for the glory of the Queen. Besides these there are Prince Arthur, or Magnificence, the perfection of all virtues; Gloriana herself, the Queen of Faërie*; and a throng of lesser characters, such as Una, or Truth; Duessa, or Falsehood; Archimago, a magician; giants, satyrs, nymphs, etc. Where story and allegory are so closely interwoven, it is not always possible to follow either clearly. The allegory at times becomes double or even threefold, taking on a religious and political significance. Queen Elizabeth herself is shadowed behind the Faërie Queene. But there is no difficulty in deciphering the large purpose of the poem, namely, to set forth the pattern of a perfect gentleman, schooled by trials and temptations, and practised in every Christian virtue. The poet's own character is unmistakably revealed in every passage that breathes love of good, or hatred of evil, or sensitiveness to suffering and sorrow.

"Nought is there under heav'ns wide hollownesse,
That moves more deare compassion of mind,
Than beautie brought t'unworthie wretchednesse
Through envies snares, or fortunes freakes unkind.
I, whether lately through her brightnes blynd,
Or through alleageance, and fast fealty,
Which I do owe unto all womankynd,
Feele my hart perst with so great agony,
When such I see, that all for pittie I could dy.

"And now it is empassioned so deepe,
For fairest Unaes sake, of whom I sing,
That my frayle eies these lines with teares do steepe,
To thinke how she through guyleful handeling,
Though true as touch, though daughter of a king,

*By the word *Faërie* Spenser means only to indicate the purely imaginary character of the Queen and her realm. His story has nothing to do with fairies in our sense of the word, and almost nothing to do with stock legendary tales. The young Prince Arthur is the same that became the legendary British king, but the atmosphere is much more that of Ariosto's and Tasso's poems than that of the Round Table legends. A few incidents are borrowed from those two writers; the rest is mostly Spenser's invention.

Though faire as ever living wight was fayre,
 Though nor in word nor deede ill meriting,
 Is from her knight divorced in despayre,
 And her dew loves deryv'd to that vile witches shayre.

"Yet she, most faithfull Ladie, all this while
 Forsaken, wofull, solitarie mayd,
 Far from all peoples preace, as in exile,
 In wildernesse and wastfull deserts strayd,
 To seeke her knight; who, subtilly betrayd
 Through that late vision which th' Enchaunter wrought,
 Had her abandond. She, of nought affrayd,
 Through woods and wastnes wide him daily sought;
 Yet wished tydings none of him unto her brought."
 (I., iii., 1-3.)

And when at sight of this same forlorn virgin a savage lion forgets his fury and falls to licking her hands and follows her as a protector, the poet is moved to exclaim

"O how can beautie maister the most strong,
 And simple truth subdue avenging wrong?"

It may be doubted, however, whether this is what the world most cares about in Spenser. The everlasting beauty of goodness and truth has never, it may be, been more nobly or sincerely sung, yet there is one thing that comes to the front in this poem even more insistently than this, and that is the imperishable charm of beauty itself. In other words, the moral appeal of the poetry is not, in the end, so great as the æsthetic. The poem is the greatest picture gallery in literature. Passages of vigor or sublimity are not often to be found. The description of the visit of Duessa to the realm of "griesly Night" in the fifth Canto of the first Book, is an exceptional, though striking, instance. But passages of beauty literally spangle the pages, revealing the poet's worship of every form of loveliness.

Of the same pervading character is the melody of his language, which only those ears attuned to the music of perfectly married words can wholly appreciate. He purposely

employed a somewhat archaic diction, charming in itself, and he invented the stanza, which now bears his name, and which for "linked sweetness long drawn out" has never been surpassed.

"The joyous birdes, shrouded in chearefull shade,
 Their notes unto the voice attempted sweet;
 Th' Angelicall soft trembling voyces made
 To th' instruments divine response meet;
 The silver sounding instruments did meet
 With the base murmure of the waters fall;
 The waters fall with difference discreet,
 Now soft, now loud, unto the wind did call;
 The gentle warbling wind low answered to all."

(II., xii., 71.)

Thus, through story after story for nearly four thousand stanzas, the limpid liquid lines flow on with scarcely a fall or eddy. And so they might have flowed, to the end of the vast design; for the power to see and the power to sing were equally unfailing. This, doubtless, is why Hazlitt called Spenser the most poetical of all English poets; and this is why he has had more influence upon poets for the last three centuries than even Shakespeare himself.

Sir Philip Sidney, whose early and heroic death at the battle of Zutphen surrounded his memory with a romantic charm, has always been looked back to as the flower of knight-hood, the embodiment of those ideals of chivalry and culture so fostered by his age. His literary accomplishments have part in this character and give him a place second to Spenser in the middle years of Elizabeth's reign. Though his works were not published till after his death, and though they reflect plainly enough the prevailing Italian and Spanish taste, their influence in turn upon the English literature of his own and the next generation is scarcely to be estimated. He wrote, in some of the best prose since Ascham's *Scholemaster*, a *Defence of Poesy*; he wrote also, in a less careful style, a long prose-poetical romance, *Arcadia* (published 1590), full of mere prettiness and conceits, but full also of wit, as the age termed it, and invention. His poetry, however, ranks higher than

*Philip
 Sidney,
 1554-1586.*

these. The *Astrophel and Stella* sonnets were published in 1591. Neither the date nor the order of their writing can be exactly determined, but they record subjectively the history of Sidney's love for a daughter of the house of Essex whom fate did not permit him to marry. By "Stella" is meant this Penelope Devereux, the star of his life, and "Astrophel" is himself, the lover of the star.* In the first of the sonnets is the famous command of the Muse to the poet, "Look in thy heart, and write." Any one sonnet will give a most imperfect conception of the depth and strength of this impassioned journal of love, but it is also true that any one of the better sonnets will by itself arrest more than a passing attention.

"Stella, think not that I by verse seek fame,
 Who seek, who hope, who love, who live but thee;
 Thine eyes my pride, thy lips mine history:
 If thou praise not, all other praise is shame.
 Nor so ambitious am I, as to frame
 A nest for my young praise in laurel tree:
 In truth, I swear I wish not there should be
 Graved in my epitaph a Poet's name.
 Nor, if I would, could I just title make,
 That any laud thereof to me should grow,
 Without my plumes from others' wings I take:
 For nothing from my wit or will doth flow,
 Since all my words thy beauty doth indite,
 And Love doth hold my hand, and makes me write."
 (Sonnet xc.)

Sonnets like this, though seldom better than this, arranged in series and addressed, like the sonnets of Petrarch to Laura, to a real or imaginary mistress, some Coelia, or Delia, or Diana, or Phillis, were written in great numbers after the time of Sidney's death. Nearly every poet, including Spenser and Shakespeare, fell into the fashion. Many of these writers are now remembered only for having adopted

*The name "Philip Sidney" yields "Phyllisides," that is, star-lover (Greek *phileo*, Latin *sidus*); or, by substituting another word for star (*astron*), "Philaster," or "Astrophil," or "Astrophel." Anagrammatic disguises of this kind were a part of the fantastic poetic methods of the time.

the fashion; as for Spenser, his *Amoretti* are certainly of worth, but his genius was too expansive, and his manner too diffuse, for entire success in this kind; of Shakespeare more will be said in the proper place. But both the fashion and the product are among the phenomena of the age. Something there is in these sonnets at their best, a certain high style, or better, loftiness of tone, which, every time we recur to them, impresses us afresh, because the something has not been native to any poet since, nor has it ever been successfully imitated. It is a compound, evidently, of real poetic feeling and a highly perfected, conventional art, but the secret of the combination has perished, and the poets and the poetry, even when they fell short of genius, remain unique.

Miscellaneous Lyrics, etc. Sonnets there were, too, in another sense, little songs, outbursts of pure melody, drenching the literature of the times as with Castalian waters. They gushed forth everywhere. Lyly's charming

"Cupid and my Campaspe played
At cards for kisses; Cupid paid,"

was part of a children's comedy played before the queen on a New Year's night. Greene's

"Oh, what is love? It is a pretty thing,
As sweet unto a shepherd as a king;
And sweeter, too,"

appeared in a prose pamphlet. Lodge's

"Love in my bosom, like a bee,
Doth suck his sweet,"

was embedded in his pastoral romance of *Rosalynde* (1590). Marlowe's "Come live with me, and be my love," was one of the songs included in a poetic miscellany, *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599). The numerous songs in Shakespeare's dramas, "Hark, hark! the lark," "Under the greenwood tree," "When icicles hang by the wall," "Come away, come away, death," "Where the bee sucks, there suck I," "Take, O, take those lips away,"

"Full fathom five thy father lies," "How should I your true love know," each bearing some touch of his indefinable magic, are too well known to need more than the merest mention. These lyrics continued to be gathered into Miscellanies like the early *Tottel's*, and nearly a dozen such Elizabethan collections are known to survive, the most famous of which, *England's Helicon*, was published in the last year of the sixteenth century. These facts enable us to understand why the England of that day has been called a nest of singing birds. From the latter part of the period, too, we may remember, came Chapman's swinging translation of Homer (1598-1615), so celebrated by Keats, in his sonnet *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer* and Drayton's fine old *Ballad of Agincourt* (c. 1605), which set the tune for Longfellow's *Skeleton in Armor* and Tennyson's *Charge of the Light Brigade*:

"Fair stood the wind for France,
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
Longer will tarry;
But putting to the main,
At Caux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train,
Landed King Harry."

But there was something greater than all this song.

CHAPTER IX

THE ELIZABETHAN DRAMA

MARLOWE SHAKESPEARE JONSON BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER WEBSTER

It would be foolish to deny, as some have done, that the perfected Elizabethan drama, which remains to this day the greatest achievement in the literary history of the English race, was in certain of its features a development from the crude, long current Miracle Plays and Moralities. At the same time no critical effort can hope to make plain the sudden and amazing transformation, without taking into account the inexplicable capacity of genius for striking out by itself and doing things that have never been done before. Law there doubtless was, but no law yet known to science will disclose just how this drama, with its splendor of form and color, its palpitating life and soaring spirit, sprang from the bloodless body of death which the Moralities indisputably were. Criticism can but record a few facts, and leave the rest to speculation.

Here and there, even in the old Miracle Plays, a writer would venture away from the strict Biblical narrative and interpolate little scenes of humor to keep alive the interest. When such a scene grew into an independent play, it came to be known as an Interlude, the nature of which we should understand better if we called it by the name of farce. John Heywood, who was a friend of Sir Thomas More, and a sort of master of revels at the court of Henry VIII. and of Queen Mary, conspicuously developed this form. His *Four PP*, for instance, written in Henry's reign, is a play in which a Palmer, a Pardoner, a Potycary, and a Pedler compete with each other in the amusing, if not very edifying pastime of telling great lies. A certain famous and much more fully developed farce was *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, written possibly by one

*Interludes,
or Farces.*

William Stevenson, and acted at Christ's College, Cambridge, about the time of Queen Elizabeth's accession. In its five acts of prolonged pother about an old dame's lost needle there is something of a plot and of character-play, but the characters are drawn from the lowest life and the language is intolerably coarse. Like Heywood's Interludes, it is written in a kind of doggerel verse, the lines in this case being long and the accents rather strongly marked.

Meanwhile the earliest play to get beyond the simplicity of the first Interludes and also keep above the farcical level, the "Ralph Roister Doister," earliest English play, in short, worthy to be called a drama, though as yet that name was scarcely employed, was the *Ralph Roister Doister* of Nicholas Udall (1506-1556), headmaster of Eton. It was probably written before 1550, more than thirteen years before the birth of Marlowe and Shakespeare. It is a love comedy, turning on the sport of deluding a conceited and simple-witted fellow into paying court to a woman who does not care for him. By the side of this, with a date that brings us nearer to the birth of Shakespeare, we may set the earliest English tragedy—*Gorboduc*, partly the work of Sackville.

"*Gorboduc*," acted It is a tragedy steeped in blood, though the bloody deeds are only reported by messengers, not enacted. 1561.

Both these plays, and also *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, plainly betray the importation of a new method, the method of the ancient Greek and Latin drama. In the first place, they are organized into acts and scenes; and in the second place, they adhere for the most part to the three classical laws of unity—the unity of time, which required that the action represented should not extend over more than one day, the unity of place, which allowed no shifting of scene, and the much more reasonable unity of action, which required that each play should have, and keep closely to, one central theme. Now if we add to these elements those already noted as coming through the native Interlude—namely, the greater elaboration of plot, the purpose

of amusing rather than instructing, and above all the substitution of real personages for abstractions—we see just what the difference between these and the earlier plays is that enables us to call the later group comedies and tragedies.

Dramas there were, then, at the very beginning of Elizabeth's reign, but not yet *the* Elizabethan drama. Much was yet to be done. The slavish following of classical models could not lead to life. The dead-weight unities of time and place had to be cast off, and even the unity of action more liberally interpreted. A poetic style at once flexible and noble had to be developed or invented. A higher conception of both comedy and tragedy as ever-present elements in the lives of men was still to be attained. Through thirty years of Elizabeth's reign the drama continued in this experimental stage, while with the increasing love for pageants, mimes, and merrymakings, theatre-going became a fashion, strolling players roamed over England, theatrical companies were formed, and theatres licensed and built. Then, with Lyly, Peele, Greene, Lodge, Marlowe, and Shakespeare, the drama suddenly came. Suddenly; for through all the thirty years of experiment, scarcely any forward movement is discernible. The poetical drama simply arrived. We have seen how, by grafting classical drama upon the Interlude, it is possible to make out a derivation from the Miracle Plays and Moralities for *Ralph Roister Doister* and *Gorboduc* and *Gammer Gurton's Needle*. But to derive from the dreary inanity of *Gorboduc* the power and splendor even of Marlowe's youthful *Tamburlaine the Great* is something that may not be attempted.

Of the representatives of this drama who antedated Shakespeare, only Christopher Marlowe may be specially treated here,

though Lyly's prose will come in for further mention.
Christopher Marlowe, Marlowe, the son of a shoemaker, was born two months earlier than Shakespeare, at Canterbury.
1564-1593.

He took a degree at Cambridge in 1583. Concerning the few years of his mature life nothing is certainly known. He was not yet thirty years old when he died, by another man's

dagger, in a brawl at a village near London. He composed five complete tragedies, *Tamburlaine the Great* (in two Parts, the First Part acted about 1587 and printed in 1590), *Dr. Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Edward the Second*, besides two extremely beautiful sestiams of a paraphrase of the ancient Greek poem of *Hero and Leander*.

The first thing to impress the reader of Marlowe's tragedies is the fiery soul of Marlowe himself, which is thinly disguised beneath his heroes. In imagination, at least, he seemed to have summed up the energies and ambitions of his age, the fierce desire to know and do all things. He would even have called magic, in which he had perhaps some faith, to his aid, that not England alone, but the remote and ancient kingdoms of the world, Greece, Egypt, Asia, might revive their glories and re-enact their triumphs to minister to this craving for universal experience. His heroes are types of greed—Tamburlaine of greed for empire, Faustus of greed for knowledge and power, the Jew of Malta of greed for gold. Faustus willingly sells his soul to Lucifer that he may have the power of conjuring back for his pastime or service such beings as Alexander,

“Chief spectacle of the world's pre-eminence,”

or Helen, of the fair

“face that launched a thousand ships

And burnt the topless towers of Ilium.”

A secondary thing perhaps in the estimate of Marlowe's genius, but one of incalculable value for the future development of English poetry, was the part he played in shaping our heroic blank verse. As to Surrey belongs the credit of finding this form, and to Shakespeare the credit of perfecting it, so to Marlowe belongs the intermediate credit of first revealing its poetic capabilities. This he did by ceasing to count off mechanically the ten syllables of the line, using them instead only as a base; by heeding rather the longer rhythm, allowing extra syllables to creep in or drop out, and lines to link with lines or break

off short in the middle; in short, by allowing his feeling so to inform the rhythm that it rises and falls, is accelerated or retarded, in accordance with the spirit that breathes through it. Here is the kind of blank verse that was employed in the tragedy of *Gorboduc*:

"I fear the fatal time now draweth on
When civil hate shall end the noble line
Of famous Brute and of his royal seed;
Great Jove, defend the mischiefs now at hand."

The difference between this and the freedom of Marlowe's lines, their lift and rush and majestic sweep, must be at once apparent:

"Now get thee to thy lords,
And tell them I will come to chastise them
For murdering Gaveston; hie thee, get thee gone!
Edward with fire and sword follows at thy heels."
(*Edward the Second*.)

"The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,
The Devil will come, and Faustus must be damned.
O, I'll leap up to my God! Who pulls me down?
See, see where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!
One drop would save my soul!"

"Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars."

(*Doctor Faustus*.)

In sum, then, this is what Marlowe did. He constructed plays full-bodied like the classical tragedies, but with a freedom that was anything but classical. This freedom resulted partly from the popular character of the English drama, created as it was chiefly by the actors themselves for mixed audiences, and partly from the genius of Marlowe, which refused to be bound by rules. He omitted, except in one instance, the chorus; he subordinated the messengers and allowed violent action on the stage; he paid no heed to the unities of time and place, which of course the imagination can dispense with; he bent the metre to his will in his "mighty line"; he breathed the

energies of his own spirit into his characters. What he failed to do, however, was to give sustained and complicated action, to relieve his high-wrought tragedy with humor, to keep his declamation free from bombast, and to impart to his characters those subtler touches of complex human nature which would make them less like creatures possessed by a single passion and more like the men and women whose daily lives we share. It is true he approached nearer to this ideal in his last play, but with some loss of opportunity for those bursts of impetuous poetry which make his romantic tragedies so fascinating. Considered merely as plays, therefore, Mr. Saintsbury makes bold to say that his dramas "are after all only the most magnificent of failures." That is another way of saying that with all their greatness they fall immeasurably short of the ideal which Shakespeare has shown us could be reached. Here then for a second time we come to a gap that historical criticism is helpless to bridge.

Meanwhile it will not be unprofitable to glance at some of the conditions that prevailed about the time of Marlowe's death and Shakespeare's advent, or in the last decade of the century. Public interest in theatrical productions was constantly growing. Two companies of players with a royal license, and a number of minor troops, were playing in the immediate suburbs of London. Theatres multiplied. "The Theatre," as it was called, and "The Curtain," were already in existence. "Blackfriars" was built in 1596, and "The Globe," a summer theatre, made especially famous by Shakespeare and his associates, in 1599. The summer theatres were for daylight performances in the open air, with a roof, it might be, over the stage, or over the boxes and galleries which ringed the pit. Spectators were allowed to sit on the stage and mingle with the actors. In the presentation of the play, the female characters were impersonated by boys. The scenery was of the rudest, or quite wanting, a change of scene being indicated by a displayed

*Status of
the Drama
about 1590.*



This sketch of the interior of the Swan Theatre was discovered a few years ago in the University Library at Utrecht. It was made by Johannes de Witt, a Dutch scholar who visited London about the year 1596. The theatre stood in Bankside, on the south shore of the Thames, where The Globe also was built, for playhouses were not allowed within the corporate limits of the city. It was a high structure, circular or octagonal in shape, and was doubtless a theatre of the best contemporary type. In the central pit, or arena (*planities, arena*), the spectators who paid the lowest price of admission, the "groundlings," were compelled to stand; seats (*sedilia*) were provided for others; such as chose to pay for the privilege might sit on the stage. The orchestra occupied a balcony at one side of the stage. The rude, bare stage itself (*proscenium*) rose from the pit on supports. Only the rear portion, which was immediately in front of the actors' gallery and tiring-room (*mimorum aedes*), and which could be screened off at need by a curtain, was covered. A roof (*tectum*) covered also the gallery (*porticus*) and the balconies below it. From a lodge at the top a trumpeter announced with a flourish the beginning of the play. A flag floated from the summit whenever a play was on the boards, the flag of this particular theatre bearing the figure of a swan.

placard. The effect of this was to concentrate attention upon the lines and the acting, a circumstance that cannot be too much emphasized, since it gives at least one very good reason why the drama then rose to a height never since attained. At the same time, where the public performance was the sole end, a practical acquaintance with the conditions and limitations of stage-acting was essential to the production of a good play, and university men, like those who have been mentioned above as preceding Shakespeare, speedily found themselves equalled as playwrights by the actors themselves. A high development of the drama would seem to have been inevitable, and only the fortuitous coming into these conditions of an extraordinary genius was needed to insure the highest development. To the glory of Elizabethan England and the delight of future generations, that genius came.

The word genius, however, must not in this connection be associated with anything of the monstrous or superhuman.

*William Shake-
speare,
1564-1616* From all that we can learn or dare imagine, William Shakespeare was not a man whom one would have picked out of a crowd, but rather such a man as one might have gone to in a crowd because he bore so little the marks of greatness and seemed so approachably human. Such a man leaves behind him slight record beyond the kindly remembrances of his familiars. Besides, few at that time, outside of the profession, were so bold as to dream that a play-actor, acting and writing plays for an hour's amusement, would be of much concern to the centuries. His genius might be amply recognized, but what lesson could be drawn from his biography? So it comes about that we can count on our fingers the known facts of Shakespeare's life. He was born of middle-class parents at Stratford-on-Avon, and baptized there on the 26th of April, 1564. At the age of eighteen he married a yeoman's daughter, Anne Hathaway, a woman considerably older than himself. About 1586 he went up to London, possibly because he had been convicted of stealing deer in Sir Thomas

Lucy's park. He became connected with the theatres, first, tradition says, by holding horses at the doors, and fell in with the group of Marlowe and Greene. For ten years he was an actor and wrote poems and plays. For some ten years more he was a shareholder in the theatres as well as an actor and playwright. Yet another ten years he spent mainly in retirement at Stratford, writing still a few plays; and he died there on the 23d of April, 1616, just fifty-two years old. ~

Really, even this outline of unheroic facts is quite superfluous. Notwithstanding all the labor that is spent on his biography, the important thing is not what particular part of the world of men and events Shakespeare came into contact with; the important and obvious thing is that he absorbed the whole world into himself, as perfectly as does the mirror which becomes indistinguishable from the landscape it reflects. We may please ourselves with fancying that the song of the lark that "at heaven's gate sings" or the vision of the dying Falstaff who "babbled of green fields," were born of the rural scenes that surrounded the poet in his youth and in his later manhood; but the howling of the tempest about Prospero's magic isle, and the vent of blood upon dead Cleopatra's bosom, are equally truthful and moving, and what experience were they born of? Shakespeare's contact with life was unquestionably first-hand as far as his opportunities allowed, and he brought to that contact the rarest power of observation and insight that has ever put itself upon record, but above all this he had the imagination to construct out of the certainly limited materials of his own experience the most varied and complex characters and situations that life affords. It is, therefore, practically impossible for us to know where his experience left off and his imagination began, nor is it easy to conceive any important purpose which such knowledge could serve.

A small portion of his work is non-dramatic, and was produced early. His first printed volume was the versified story of *Venus and Adonis*, 1593; *Lucrece* followed in 1594.

They are amatory poems of a type then in vogue, scarcely so good on the whole as Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, though superior in some very important respects. His un-
His Poems qualifiedly great poems are the *Sonnets*, which may
and Sonnets. have been mostly composed about the same period, though they were not published until 1609. They are sonnets of fourteen lines, arranged, not in the Petrarchian form of octave and sestet, but in three quatrains with a closing couplet. By this arrangement, the application, antithesis, climax, or whatever it may be, is concentrated in the last two lines, gaining a peculiar force that is usually missing in the other form. The occasion of the sonnets, and the identity of the persons—a man and a woman—addressed in them, have given rise to endless and mostly profitless discussion. It seems quite enough to know them for what they are, love poems, namely, of the most intense kind, with an intensity curbed always by calm reason, leaving them at the highest level of poetic expression without overflow and charging them with all the fullness of thought that lines still lyric may be made to bear.

“When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
 I all alone beweepe my outcast state
 And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries
 And look upon myself and curse my fate,
 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
 Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
 Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
 With what I most enjoy contented least;
 Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
 Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
 Like to the lark at break of day arising
 From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
 For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
 That then I scorn to change my state with kings.”

Perhaps nowhere else in all poetry is selection so hard a task. Smooth and tranquil lines,

“When to the sessions of sweet silent thought”—

soaring lines,

“Not marble nor the gilded monuments”—

imaginative lines,

“Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang”—

lines of profoundest truth,

“Love is not love

Which alters when it alteration finds”—

crowd into the memory with almost importunate insistence. No other sonnets have approached them in manifoldness of excellence. The sonnets of Milton and Wordsworth are so different in theme, those of Mrs. Browning and Rossetti so different in manner and expression, that comparison is impossible and nothing but the identity of name could suggest it. As for other sonnets of the Elizabethan age; some doubtless equal them in sweetness, or stateliness, or sincerity, but none disclose such an array of various and harmonized virtues as sets this series apart and supreme.

The precise chronology of Shakespeare's plays will never be determined. Elizabethan plays were written for acting, not for *His* publication, and there were good reasons why the *Dramas*. companies should keep their plays in manuscript. Shakespeare's thirty-six dramas (*Pericles* is now included as a thirty-seventh) were not published in a body until the famous “first folio” of 1623, nine years after his death, and more than half of them were then published for the first time. Separate plays had been printed earlier in cheap quarto form, two or three in 1597. The date of the earliest discovered allusion to any play is 1594. It is possible to distinguish broadly four groups: first, early plays, notably *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Romeo and Juliet*, with several of the English chronicle plays, including *Richard III.*; second, plays written after the age of thirty, towards the end of the century, chiefly romantic comedies like the *Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night*;

third, plays of marked maturity, belonging to the early sixteen-hundreds, the tragedies of *Julius Cæsar*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *Lear*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, etc.; fourth, late plays of a strangely serene temper, free fancy, and magic touch, especially *Cymbeline*, *Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*. Of course they vary in excellence as they vary in theme and in the maturity of the art that created them. Those named above, with three or four others which readers may supply for themselves at will, are among the best. To distinguish more particularly is difficult, where all plead their individual perfections, and where great diversity of kind fairly precludes comparison. But as tragedy is on a higher plane than comedy, and as a poet's dreams may outstrip an actual king's or warrior's deeds, opinion has tended to set above the rest the four great romantic tragedies that chance to bear the briefest names—*Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, and *King Lear*.

In such a vast body of work, of so varied and complex a character, produced under such obscure conditions, it is evident that

scholarship must find no end of problems. The scholarship, however, that deals with these problems is of a peculiarly human kind. Shakespeare himself, with

his common school education, his "small Latin and less Greek," was no scholar as his age would have defined the term, and his work is at the farthest remove from the kind of erudition that engages the zeal of the dry-as-dust student. Some problems there are for purely documentary investigation. The life of the man is one. The sources of the plays is another—for Shakespeare was a perfectly free-handed borrower of plots and situations.* The detection even of parallels, the tracing of thoughts and expressions to earlier or contemporary writers, though little profitable in his case, may be carried on in the

*The *Hamlet* legend, for instance, may be found in the works of the old Danish historian, Saxo Grammaticus; the chief source of *Macbeth* and other historical dramas was Holinshed's *Chronicles*; the main incident of *The Merchant of Venice* is from an Italian collection of stories, *Il Pecorone*, while the casket story is from the *Gesta Romanorum*; etc.

same spirit of historical inquiry.* But beyond these are problems which demand a different kind of study. Where the texts vary, or where the readings are manifestly "corrupt," that is, imperfect or wrong, it becomes a nice question what Shakespeare actually wrote, and the force of a passage or even the understanding of some entire scene or character may turn on such a question. Shall we, for instance, in *Macbeth* I. vii. 6, read with the Folio, "upon this banke (*i.e.*, bench) and schoole of time," or accept the common emendation, "upon this bank and shoal of time?" Since investigation of the spelling only proves that either is possible, the last appeal is to poetic judgment. Again, since we know that it was customary to retouch or adapt plays, or for several writers to collaborate in producing one, there arises the problem of determining what parts of some of these dramas may have been written by other hands, or what part Shakespeare may have had in the production of other dramas sometimes doubtfully attributed to him. Still more difficult, perhaps, is the attempt to judge from internal evidence how early or late in life any particular play was written. An intimate acquaintance not only with all the traits of Shakespeare's genius but with life itself, and a psychological insight and poetic appreciation akin to divination, are needed for work of this kind. It is human scholarship in the highest sense.

The poet's vocabulary offers a study of more immediate importance. To casual observation it may seem almost wholly modern. It might have sounded a little queer as Shakespeare would have pronounced it, with broad *a*'s and lip-rounded short *u*'s, but the words are our familiar words, with only here and there an obsolete term.

*The
Language.*

* One example may be given. The following lines are from Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, Sonnet 39, and may be studied in connection with *Macbeth* II. ii. 36-40, for whatever the study is worth:

"Come, Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low."

Montaigne has lately been examined as a Shakespearean "source" in this sense.

It is, indeed, by the side of Spenser's archaic diction, decidedly modern, and one seldom requires a glossary to read it. At the same time, if we would get always the exact meaning, and thereby increase our enjoyment, we need to bear in mind the fact that three hundred years have worked some inevitable changes in our language. Not only words, but meanings of words, have been lost, and new ones gained. An obsolete word will give us little trouble. But an old or unfamiliar meaning of a word still in use may quite escape us unless we are on our guard. When we discover that in Shakespeare not only appetites may be "eager," but also the food that satisfies them (Sonnet cxviii), and that acid which sours milk is thought of as "eager droppings," we see that we must get back to an earlier, more concrete, meaning of the word; and then we are better prepared to understand just what was in his mind when he wrote of an "eager foe," an "eager cry," "the bitter clamor of two eager tongues," "It is a nipping and an eager air." Or if we but press the literal meanings of the words, the "extravagant and erring spirit" which appears to Hamlet in such a "questionable shape" becomes a simple ghost that stalks abroad with affable mien. Three or four such examples suffice to prove the point. When a poet writes, as Shakespeare did, with such absolute sureness of thought and pregnancy of meaning, we can ill afford to miss anywhere his slightest intent.

Passing now to the substance of the dramas, we note first the background against which the main characters and action are projected. Comparatively, the background is *Background*. of slight importance, since humanity reveals itself as much the same in all times and places. But the thing in itself is not slight, and it helps to mark the gulf that separates the Shakespearean drama from what had preceded it. One can imagine the astonishment with which a Greek or a French dramatist would have looked at one of these plays. Instead of merely listening to the successive declamations of a few characters, he would have found his ears and eyes assailed with all

the noise and bustle of life. The scene shifts rapidly from sea to land, from street to palace, from senate chamber to tent and battlefield. Drums beat, soldiers cross and recross the stage with flourish of trumpets and music of hautboys, carriers with lanterns shout for ostlers in a tavern yard, royalty goes to its coronation at Westminster, there are gaming and drinking, processions of priests and courtiers, throngs of Grecian revellers, Roman mobs, English thieves and justices, a wine-cellar, a graveyard, a tiring-room, a moated grange,—all the bewildering panorama of life as Shakespeare knew it in his own day or dreamed it in the days of others. No bewilderment, however, results. Action may go on within action, the characters may turn actors themselves and a play start up behind the real play, but the controlling hand of the poet so interweaves these things as merely to enhance the sense of reality while leaving the central plot unbroken.

The background itself is, for the most part, feudal or renaissance Europe. Society, for instance, is not democratic, but aristocratic, with distinctions sharply drawn. Instead of modern commercial and industrial enterprises, there are family feuds and national wars. Instead of science in its laboratory, there is superstition and the witches' cauldron. But these are the accidents of time, and scarcely in any way affect the universality of the passions that play their part among them. Moreover, the element of external nature is one that does not change with time, and this permanent element of truthfulness and beauty is not lost sight of. True, to a dramatist this is of little concern, and Shakespeare's glimpses of nature may seem slight to those who are read in the poetry of Wordsworth and Tennyson, but they are seldom wanting. If the play is *The Merchant of Venice*, there is the star-sown sky of an Italian night; if *Macbeth*, a blasted Scottish heath; if *The Tempest*, the roaring waves, the whistling winds, the organ-toned thunder. The accuracy and sympathy, too, with which these things are portrayed, are in accord with the truth that marks all else.

Whether it be the "reverberate hills," the "brown furze," the "ribald crows," the "husks wherein the acorn cradled," or the

"daffodils,

That come before the swallow dares, and take

The winds of March with beauty,"

the observation and love of a true poet of nature are inevitably disclosed.

But the essence of drama lies, of course, in the passions and actions of the characters. Were Shakespeare's dramas less comprehensive in scope, less profound in analysis, less minute in detail, less faithful to things as they are, it might require a hundred words properly to characterize them. As it is, to say simply that they *enact life*, is to put in two words the truest statement of their nature and the highest tribute to their virtue. The characters are all men and women, who are never *made* to act in any particular way, but are simply seen to act, by the direction of circumstances and under pressure of conflicting wills, in a perfect accordance with the laws of their own being. Never before Shakespeare's time, except to a limited extent in comedy, had the drama set before itself this difficult ideal. The personages of Greek tragedy may be very real men and women (less often women), and the situations may even draw out character, but character is seldom seen to create a situation or control action; all that is in the hands of an arbitrary and unalterable power. The Gods, and the Fate behind the Gods, are the movers, and men and women are the puppets of Destiny. In the pre-Shakespearean drama, from the Miracle Plays down, the word character is almost a misnomer. The character may be drawn from history or legend, and in so far real, but it is absolutely fixed, as stationary in its composition as the particles of a monument. At the worst it is not even real, but a bare allegorical abstraction of some one quality with no human likeness beyond the power to walk and talk. At the best, as in Marlowe, it is still a magnificent impersonation of a single passion to the exclusion of the count-

less humors and motives that combine to make real character—is a type, in other words, and not an individual.

Now there are types in Shakespeare too. Character in the real world leans always toward the exaggeration of some quality, the tyranny of some passion, and we have an actual man who will stand in that particular for ten thousand men. The play of life would not otherwise go on; and the possibility of moral instruction would vanish with the need for it. Yet there are seldom two types of the same virtue or vice that are not in their minor differences widely remote. Just here is the truthfulness of Shakespeare's art. His types have always the minor distinctions; they are individuals still, with a ruling passion that does not crowd out other passions and obliterate their kinship with men. Hence it is that his characters do not pass readily into dictionary names. Shylock suggests himself as a possible exception; but even when we are prompted to call a man a Shylock, we know well that, however grasping or implacably revengeful he may be, he is not like to Shylock all in all. Upon Shylock, as upon you and me, the laws of permutation have worked, and he keeps his individuality without hazard of duplication.

Some departure from reality may be granted in the dramatist's tendency to accentuate and idealize. His grouping of characters, for example, is often arbitrary and ideal. Such people we have all seen. But so many marked and contrasted individualities in the same group it would be hard to find. It is as if precisely those people of a community who have the most interesting personalities and the greatest capacity for reacting upon their surroundings, were brought into a single circle and took part in a single though complicated action. Gather such a group of characters, for instance, into a great feudal family of lord and lady, retainer, page, tiring-woman, down to cellarer and kitchen scullion, and imagine the interesting spectacle which the ordinary life of that family would present. Then let there be introduced some extraordinary occurrence, with its attendant commotion, and we should have a further point in which the

dramas depart from the more familiar aspects of real life. Their scenes are likewise in a measure ideal. That is to say, they are either taken from the great crises of history, or they are invented outright. But all this is only the exercise of the poet's privilege to select and combine, that art may reveal life at its highest possibilities. The processes of nature and of human history are slow; not every year do they bring on the stage a Mark Antony and a battle of Actium, a Hamlet and his murdered father. The poet simply adapts history, or creates it, imaginatively, for the greater force of his revelations. Essential reality remains. The love of Romeo and Juliet, the ingratitude of Lear's daughters, gain in interest and tragic pathos from the splendor or majesty of their setting, yet lose at the same time no touch or accent of human truth. Rank and station may give a strong bent to character or change the direction and object of its energies; they cannot for a moment deflect the workings of any physical or moral law,—mitigate remorse for crime, or alleviate the pangs of wounded love. Beneath the robes of state or the rags of beggary, Shakespeare never fails to reveal the man.

In illustration of this fundamental thesis, that Shakespeare's dramas enact life, and that his characters are always individuals, responding like individuals to their environment, growing and changing beneath the shaping power of circumstances and their own deeds, take a single illustration. When, at the end of the tragedy of *Macbeth*, disaster is overtaking the king who has won his throne by such foul means, the wailing of women is heard.

Macbeth.

Wherefore was that cry?

Seyton. The queen, my lord, is dead.

Macbeth.

She should have died hereafter.

Death was certain, anyway! Yet Macbeth had been a most affectionate husband to this woman who had abetted him in his terrible deeds. Crime has wrought its inevitable consequences. The woman dies of remorse and madness, and the husband, dead to every motion of affection, is prompted to make but this unfeeling comment upon the fate of the partner of his love

and guilt. The man who has "supp'd full with horrors" cannot be touched to pity by that which once would have been the most pitiful thing that could befall him. It is not Shakespeare makes it so; it is the unalterable law which a moral universe imposes upon its living creatures.

In this wonderful truth, then, to human life, revealing an ideal world that in every minutest line and light and shadow seems the faithful counterpart of our real world, lies the supreme gift of the poet whom of all poets we like best to call a creator. It is impossible to follow here the gift in its amplitude; to give any conception of the constantly shifting conditions under which he sets men to work out the drama of their destinies, nor even to enumerate the variety of characters created, running as they do the whole gamut of manhood and womanhood, and reaching beyond into regions of the supernatural, of monsters like Caliban and spirits like Ariel. The further problems—problems this time of dramatic interpretation—that arise in connection with these aspects of the work, are seen to reach out indefinitely, almost as endless and quite as fascinating as in real life. Indeed, they are the problems of real life. We seek a consistent explanation of Hamlet's character and deeds because Hamlet is a man, created by a poet to whom the darkest laws of our being were as an open book, and we know that somewhere hangs the key to the mystery. To interpret the character of this figure in a play becomes as legitimate an exercise of the reason as to interpret the deeds of Cæsar in history. These things, however, must be left to the student as he finds his way into the deeper study of Shakespeare; they are not for discussion here.

Likewise, the question of Shakespeare's philosophy of life is not one upon which to linger. To inquire very seriously into the "teaching" of his dramas would be quite to miss *Hamlet* their purpose. Always, "the play's the thing."

The play exists for our amusement, our admiration, the satisfaction of our cravings for emotional stimulus, rather than for explicit spiritual guidance. At the same time Shake-

speare was well aware that to play thus upon the spirit with counterfeits of life, was to play also upon the moral sense; the play within *Hamlet* is a thing wherein to "catch the conscience" of the king. The dramas may have therefore a moral drift. Spirituality of a religious type is not conspicuous. This, it has been affirmed, is a point in which Shakespeare failed to grasp quite the whole range of the human soul. The sense of an eternal future to which the present is but prelude, of an overruling Providence to whom the conduct of all mortal affairs must finally be referred, seems in him not strong or abiding. Certainly the life of holiness and spiritual aspiration which was the ideal of so many of the best minds of the middle ages engaged his attention but little; nor does he concern himself, as men like Milton and Bunyan in a later age do, with justifying the ways of God to man. This, we may take it, is the sum total of the charge. No one could possibly wish to narrow him to the Dante or Milton measure; only critics have been known to wish that he had somewhere shown a fuller appreciation of the heights and depths of that measure. But even if this be admitted, and also the point that he leaves the question of the hereafter in the dark, where the intellect unaided by faith must leave it, he finds still a vital religion in human sympathy and duty. Man as man, in every age of the world and every station in life, calls forth his interest, and there is no recess of the human heart which his understanding has not illuminated. He reads the motives of the lowest as well as of the highest of men, and makes us feel much the same tolerant sympathy for them that they must feel for themselves, because he puts us so entirely in possession of their point of view. This fundamental humanity of the poet is best revealed in two things which the limits of our space will not allow us to dwell on here. The one is his humor, which is not only the basis of his comedies, the most perfect exemplification of the comic spirit ever created, but which colors also the warp and woof of his darkest tragedies; and humor in its perfection can only grow

from this same tolerant sympathy that embraces all the follies and inconsistencies of men. The other is his portraiture of women, which in insight and reverence also surpasses anything of the kind that we know, giving us a gallery of characters that must be the admiration of every age. Taking the plays all in all, the great virtue of wide-embracing charity could not be more effectively preached. Moreover, it is to be noted that even when Shakespeare tolerates infirmity and vice, he does not condone. Over against baseness of character and action he always sets some nobility; and there is no question which of the two is commended. Nor is there any question as to the ultimate issues of good or evil. The personal and social virtues are held up to praise. If the evil seems to triumph, it is not with applause; but seldom does it even seem to triumph. The plays, in short, are moral precisely as life is moral; there is absolute respect for the law that in human life apportions finally to every deed a reward in its own kind.

All that has been said of Shakespeare as a dramatist is cumulative evidence of his title to the name of poet. Yet of the

Essential Poetry. essential qualities of a poet, as distinct from any special function, something remains to be said. These qualities consist in the imaginative grasp of reality and truth—ideality, if one please to call it so—and the musical utterance of it. In these also, Shakespeare seems to our present comprehension the final master. Collect his utterances upon any topic of human interest,—youth, age, vanity, mercy, sleep, tears, music, poetry itself,—and mark at once the profound truth of his observations and the luminous and harmonious expression of them. Take Macbeth's picture of night, where by a single stroke is conjured up a vision of almost appalling magnitude and dread,—

“ Now o'er the one half-world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtain'd sleep; ”

take the whole of the long apostrophe to sleep in the third act of 2 *Henry IV.*, of which a fragment may be quoted,—

“ Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude imperious surge;”

take Cleopatra's dream of Antony's imperial greatness,

“ His legs bestrid the ocean; his rear'd arm
Crested the world; his voice was propertied
As all the tuned spheres;”

take Hamlet's declaration of faithfulness to the memory of his father's spirit,

“ Remember thee?

Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there,
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter.”

Is it conceivable that these things could be surpassed in their truth whether to fact or fancy, or could be more aptly and beautifully said? The same poetic faculty is revealed in a multitude of single epithets of every kind—“the bubble reputation,” “vaulting ambition,” “mortal coil,”—more especially perhaps in epithets descriptive of some object or phenomenon of nature, such as “the shard-borne beetle,” “black-brow'd night,” “spongy April,” “the mutinous winds,” “the multitudinous seas,” “the gutter'd rocks and congregated sands.” There is no trace of superfluity in the two opening lines of Chaucer's *Prologue*, and yet “spongy April” compresses their whole meaning into two words. The variety of images, too, under which a single idea is conceived is evidence of the genuinely creative mind. It is not that Shakespeare never repeats himself. In minor matters he does. His woods are “thorny,” his butterflies “gilded,” his steeds “fiery,” or “barbed,” or “neighing.”

more than once. But phrases rarely become conventional in his hands, and wherever actual imagery is involved, the freshness and fertility of his imagination are amazing. Thus the rainbow is now the "watery arch," now the "many colored messenger," now the "blue Iris," and now the "blue bow" crowning the "bosky acres." The "rosy-fingered Aurora" of Homer comes in wholly new guises; Aurora herself appears only in two of the earliest plays. Instead, we have half a hundred variations:

"The eastern gate, all fiery-red,
Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,
Turns into yellow gold his salt green streams."

"The early village-cock
Hath twice done salutation to the morn."

"The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire."

"But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air."

"But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill."

"Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops."

"But when from under this terrestrial ball
He fires the proud tops of the eastern pines."

Such is the quality of an imagination which, since words are powerless to describe it, must be felt in its actual workings or not at all. We know that Shakespeare died before the decay of his faculties, and we therefore please ourselves with thinking that to the very last, in his quiet retreat from the world at Stratford, he rested content and self-contained, his work finished, his wisdom ripened, his brain still silently coining the sights and sounds of life and nature into an unrecorded poetry of supernal loveliness. No play, indeed, is richer in pure imaginative charm than *The Tempest*, one of the very last which he wrote; and from it has been selected for inscription upon his monument in West-

minster Abbey a portion of the speech of Prospero, a passage which marks perhaps as high a reach as poetry has yet attained.

"These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."



Inscription on stone above Shakespeare's grave in Stratford Church.

Next to Shakespeare among the dramatists of this period, both in time and in general importance, stands Ben Jonson.

Beginning in 1598 or earlier with *Every Man in his Humour*, a play in which Shakespeare acted a part, Ben Jonson, 1573?–1637.

he took at once a position of prominence, and by his vigorous personality, his dramatic and other literary work, and his rise to royal favor and the Laureateship under James, came to be the dominant literary figure of the age. He was huge of body, like Dr. Johnson, the literary dictator of more than a century later, and like him also, was afflicted with disease. But an indomitable energy marked every step of his career. He was of Border descent, though probably born in Westminster. He was taken early from Westminster school and set to work with a bricklayer's trowel, but, while yet a boy, joined the army in the Netherlands, where, he boasted, he killed one of the enemy in

personal combat. Then, returning to London, he fell into the wild life of the actors and was once tried for killing a fellow-player in a duel. His bluff and blustering nature may have easily provoked quarrels, but his extraordinary talents compelled respect and won him renown. It is characteristic of the time that such a man should have been found now in prison, now engaged in contests of wit with Shakespeare and others at the Mermaid Tavern, and now dining in the chambers of the king. It is equally characteristic that this same man, after living through the reign of James and half through that of Charles, writing a score of dramas and twice as many masques and entertainments, besides numerous minor things, should have died in poverty, writing still with such remnants of energy as dissipation and disease had left him.*

The defect of Jonson as a dramatist may be described in a word. It is the inability to set forth character as we have seen character exemplified in Shakespeare. Instead, to take a name from his first play, he sets forth "humours." This word "humour" (for humor in our sense was not in any marked degree Jonson's) means with him an idiosyncrasy, that is, a personal peculiarity of temperament, a bias, a manner, a ruling passion, a whim. Something like this Marlowe had portrayed on a heroic scale. But heroism of the grandiose type was not for Jonson. Though he wrote two tragedies of the lofty kind (*Sejanus* and *Catiline*), he was essentially a realist, caring less for the field of romantic tragedy than of realistic comedy. He aimed particularly to satirize the follies of his day.

"With an armed and resolved hand
I'll strip the ragged follies of the time
Naked as 'at their birth."

(Prologue to *Every man Out of his Humour*.)

This he did by taking some vice, eccentricity, or affectation,

*Jonson's posthumous volume (1641) of notes and reflections on various subjects, known as *Timber, or Discoveries Made upon Men and Matter*, is an admirable example both of masculine thought and of direct, vigorous prose.

personifying it by a name that expressed its character, and making it play its part. His three best comedies are *Volpone*, or *the Fox*; *Epicœne*, or *the Silent Woman*; and *The Alchemist*. In these he comes nearest to portraying genuine characters, but the "humours" are still plainly apparent. *Volpone* is a transcendent villain, who delights in ministering to his evil desires by entangling lesser villains in the nets of their own. *Epicœne* is a pretended woman who feigns to be of a silent disposition before her marriage to a man whose peculiar monomania is horror of noise. *The Alchemist* is another arch-deceiver whose special method of gulling the gullible satirizes the foolish search for the philosopher's stone. All are comedies of manners, excellent, indeed, but very different from the romantic comedies of sentiment in which Shakespeare's finer fancy delighted.

Jonson's merits are no less conspicuous. In the first place, he was sturdily independent; he eschewed romanticism, not following Shakespeare, as others were disposed to do, but warmly espousing the cause of realism and the classical ideals of dramatic method. Perhaps this reversion is due in part to his learning, for Jonson was exceedingly learned. He mastered the erudition of antiquity as he did the obscurest chicaneries of London quacks and thieves, and kept it all in his capacious memory to be poured out at need. Of course it little helps a play to have a character talking of

"your chrysosperme,
Your sal, your sulphur, and your mercury,
Your marchesite, your tutie, your magnesia,"

but the learning is never wholly inappropriate. In the second place, he was, at his best, a master of plot and action. Coleridge regarded *The Alchemist* as having a plot of almost "absolute perfection;" and those who have had the good fortune to see the play on the boards know that it is one of the most breathless and unflagging pieces of action ever staged. Then, in the third place, he was equally a master of scenical effects. This was shown in the court-masques to which he devoted his talents at the

instigation of the pleasure-loving James I. The masque is a species of entertainment standing midway between a pageant or a pantomime and a regular play. It was in part a natural development from the old English social entertainments known as "disguisings"—our modern "masquerades"—in which dancing was almost always a feature; but it took its final, elaborate stage-form under the influence of the masque as already fully developed in Italy. Enormous sums of money came to be expended upon these spectacles, which in the splendor of their accessories offered a strong contrast to the bareness of the scenes in the regular theatres; and at this time Jonson the poet, Inigo Jones the architect, and Ferrabosco the Italian music master, vied with one another in the ingenuity of their several contributions. Jonson's special service lay in elevating the masque to a position near the drama by supplying the dramatic elements of plot and dialogue and giving them a literary value, at the same time adapting them to the scenical requirements.

Finally, to these dramatic virtues should be added Jonson's lyrical gifts, which were nearly on a level with those of the best poets of that lyrical age. His plays, especially his masques, are sprinkled with songs of every variety. He published also several volumes, notably *Underwoods* and *The Forest* (1616), made up largely of that class of short, occasional poems which, often for want of a title, become best known to fame by their first lines. Among them is the celebrated song "To Celia," which, though but a paraphrase of sixteen lines, from the Greek Philostratus, stands among the foremost lyrics in our literature:—

"Drink to me, only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst, that from the soul doth rise,
Doth ask a drink divine:
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

"I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
 Not so much honoring thee,
 As giving it a hope, that there
 It could not wither'd be.
 But thou thereon didst only breathe,
 And sent'st it back to me:
 Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
 Not of itself, but thee."

The names of Beaumont and Fletcher are always conjoined, because they are known to have collaborated in a number of plays, and because it is often impossible to distinguish either their respective parts in these plays or their separate productions. Both came of better families than most of the

Francis dramatists; one was educated at Oxford, the other
 Beaumont, at Cambridge; and they lived together at London.
 1584-1616. Both were friends of Jonson, whom Beaumont ad-
 John dressed in a well-known poem:—
 Fletcher,
 1579-1625.

"What things have we seen
 Done at the Mermaid!"

Fletcher, it is just possible, had the assistance of Shakespeare in writing *The Two Noble Kinsmen*; at any rate, the play seems to show traces of Shakespeare's hand; and Shakespeare's *Henry VIII.*, as we have it, shows pretty clear traces of Fletcher's hand. Since Beaumont died at thirty-two, Fletcher, the elder and longer-lived of the pair, certainly had the larger share in the fifty-two plays that pass under their names. He was sole author of some, notably *The Faithful Shepherdess* (c. 1609), a beautiful pastoral drama, and a worthy forerunner of Jonson's unfinished *Sad Shepherd* and Milton's *Comus*. Of the products of their joint authorship, *Philaster* (c. 1608) and *The Maid's Tragedy* (c. 1610) may be specially mentioned.

Their plays may nearly all be described as romantic comedies or tragedies, somewhat of the Shakespearean kind, differing decidedly from Jonson's realistic comedies of manners. But they could not be mistaken for Shakespeare's work. In the ver-

sification, surplus syllables are freely admitted, and there is especially manifest a liking for double or triple endings.

"Thy brother,
While he was good, I call'd him king; and served him
With that strong faith, that most unwearied valor,
Pull'd people from the farthest suns to seek him,
And beg his friendship. I was then his soldier." *
(*The Maid's Tragedy*, V. iii.)

Whatever may be the merits of this movement, it is certainly less firm, less suited to heroic or impressive speech, than lines with a prevalent masculine ending. In moral tone, the plays are appreciably lower than Shakespeare's. The language is less refined, and vice itself is not only tolerated as a necessary constituent of plays that represent life, but it is often allowed to pass without entailing its logical consequences. In loftiness of thought and imagination, finally, they never touch the Shakespearean heights. Nevertheless, the plays are almost invariably well constructed. Their plots have abundant action, their characters are full of life, their diction is poetic, their humor and pathos unfailingly effective. Extremely popular in their own day, for more than two centuries they held the stage successfully against all rivals, and will bear revival still.

Very different are the works of John Webster, the author of two remarkable examples of the so-called "tragedies of blood" (of which Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* is also a specimen), namely, *The White Devil* (1612), and *The Duchess of Malfi* (acted 1616). The interest that inheres in these two really great plays is one of such unrelieved tragic horror that they are scarcely

suited to presentation on the stage. "Pleasure of life, what is it?" asks the dying Antonio in the latter play, as he reviews his own troubled existence,— "Only the good hours of an ague;" and as the characters die, one after another, by stranglers'

*Compare the endings in the soliloquy of Wolsey in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII.* III., ii, a portion almost certainly written by Fletcher.

cords, poisoned kisses, and daggers, the reader who follows with sympathy is moved to a horrified assent.

"We are merely the stars' tennis-balls, struck and banded
Which way pleases them."—(Ibid., V. iv.)

Yet Webster is, as even these brief quotations may show, a dramatist of tremendous power both of scene and phrase. He has not the varied excellences that went to make, either popular playwrights like Jonson, Beaumont, and Fletcher, or a transcendent dramatist and poet like Shakespeare, but in the single quality of intensity of imagination he quite excels the former and is hardly surpassed by Shakespeare himself. Certainly no other among the many remaining dramatists who, each with some special excellence, helped to make illustrious the annals of the stage through the reigns of Elizabeth and the first Stuarts, may so confidently be mentioned in company with these.



Interior of a London Theatre, 1632.

CHAPTER X

ELIZABETHAN PROSE

LYLY HOOKER BACON BURTON THE KING JAMES BIBLE

The history of Elizabethan prose takes us well back again to the time when Spenser's early poems were preluding the true Elizabethan poetry. After the posthumous publication, in 1570, of the *Scholemaster* of Roger Ascham, whom we have treated as a pre-Elizabethan, the first prose work of literary importance outside of the chronicles of Holinshed *John Lyly*, (1578) and Hakluyt (1582), etc., was John Lyly's 1554?-1606. *Euphues, the Anatomy of Wit*, published in 1579, and followed the next year by a sequel, *Euphues and his England*. In framework, this is a romance, not of the chivalresque but of the mild society type, in which a gentleman of Athens, after wooing a lady at Naples, is made to pursue his further fortunes in England. In substance, it is a didactic treatise on such things as court manners, love, education, and religion. But the book is remembered to-day because of the extreme to which it carried a style then somewhat prevalent in Europe. The marks of this style, thenceforth known as "Euphuism," are excessive balance and antithesis, often enforced by alliteration and even rhyme, and endless fantastical similes drawn sometimes from the mythical properties of plants and animals—the hyssop, the salamander, the "serpent Porphirius,"—as described in old herbals and bestiaries. Here is an example of the style at its best:—

"The rose that is eaten with the canker is not gathered because it groweth on that stalk that the sweet doth, neither was Helen made a star, because she came of that egg with *Castor*, nor thou



QUEEN ELIZABETH IN 1592
From the Portrait at Ditchley



a gentleman in that thy ancestors were of nobility. It is not the descent of birth but the consent of conditions that maketh gentlemen, neither great manors but good manners that express the true image of dignity. There is copper coin of the stamp that gold is, yet is it not current; there cometh poison of the fish as well as good oil, yet is it not wholesome; and of man may proceed an evil child and yet no gentleman. For as the wine that runneth on the lees is not therefore to be accounted neat because it was drawn of the same piece; or as the water that springeth from the fountain's head and floweth into the filthy channel is not to be called clear because it came of the same stream; so neither is he that descendeth of noble parentage, if he desist from noble deeds, to be esteemed a gentleman in that he issued from the loins of a noble sire, for that he obscureth the parents he came of, and discrediteth his own estate."

At its worst the style deserved the ridicule which Shakespeare put upon it through the pedant Holofernes in *Love's Labor's Lost*,* and in spite of its popularity at court and some possibly good influence in shaping English prose by showing that there is virtue in balance and symmetry, it was destined speedily to perish of its own extravagance.

About this same time Sidney must have been engaged upon his prose works, already mentioned, the *Defence of Poesy*, and the long, half chivalresque, half pastoral tale of *Arcadia*. The latter shows some traces of Euphuism, together with other distortions of fancy, or tortured figures of speech, better known as "conceits." The two books well represent two prevalent kinds of prose—scholastic treatises, and romances. Quite the best of the latter, regarded purely as a romance, was Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde* (1590), a little pastoral which gave Shakespeare the plot of *As You Like It*. Besides these, there were many travellers' chronicles; and there were tracts or pamphlets, serious, satirical, and humorous, printed in great numbers on all conceivable subjects. The style ranged from Latin heaviness and

* "*Holofernes*. This is a gift that I have, simple, simple; a foolish extravagant spirit, full of forms, figures, shapes, objects, ideas, apprehensions, motions, revolutions: these are begot in the ventricle of memory, nourished in the womb of *pia mater*, and delivered upon the mellowing of occasion. But the gift is good in those in whom it is acute, and I am thankful for it."—Act IV., Scene ii.

intricacy to vernacular license, cumbrous when there was an attempt at formality, grammatically unformed when there was not. But in the next decade two writers, very dissimilar indeed, rose above the throng by superior worth of matter as well as by perfection of style. The first of these was Richard Hooker, the second and more lastingly important, Francis Bacon.

Hooker was a churchman who wrote an elaborate treatise on *Ecclesiastical Polity*, defending the principles into which the

English Church had settled since the Reformation, especially under the wise policy of Elizabeth, at the same time opposing the narrower views of the Puritans, who were already threatening to bring about a schism. Four books of the treatise were published in 1594, a fifth in 1597, and three more after the author's death. The work is notable for its philosophy and its style,—for the way in which it shows that behind what looks like an accidental compromise in church policy are really the workings of law, and for the harmonious numbers of its long-linked, Latin-like clauses. A reverent sense of the reign of law, natural and supernatural, lifts it, style and all, into the category of great books.

“Concerning faith, the principal object whereof is that eternal verity which hath discovered the treasures of hidden wisdom in Christ; concerning hope, the highest object whereof is that everlasting goodness which in Christ doth quicken the dead; concerning charity, the final object whereof is that incomprehensible beauty which shineth in the countenance of Christ the Son of the living God: concerning these virtues, the first of which beginning here with a weak apprehension of things not seen, endeth with the intuitive vision of God in the world to come; the second beginning here with a trembling expectation of things far removed and as yet but only heard of, endeth with real and actual fruition of that which no tongue can express; the third beginning here with a weak inclination of heart towards him unto whom we are not able to approach, endeth with endless union, the mystery whereof is higher than the reach of the thoughts of men; concerning that faith, hope, and charity, without which there can be no salvation, was there ever any mention made saving only in that law which God himself hath from heaven re-

vealed? There is not in the world a syllable muttered with certain truth concerning any of these three, more than hath been supernaturally received from the mouth of the eternal God."—Book I, xi. 6.

Wholly unlike Hooker, except for the fundamental spirit of philosophical inquiry which equally characterizes his works, was the statesman, Francis Bacon. He was a son of Elizabeth's Lord Keeper and a nephew of her *Francis* Elizabeth's Lord Keeper and a nephew of her *Bacon,* Treasurer, Lord Burleigh, but though an able lawyer, and member of Parliament, his advancement was *1561-1626.* tardy during her reign; under James, however, he held various posts of honor, attaining finally to the position of Chancellor, when he was created a peer with the title of Baron Verulam. This last was in 1618. Three years later he was tried for bribery, fined, imprisoned, and banished from court. The sentence was soon remitted, and he returned to a semi-public life. He died, in 1626, of a cold caught while experimenting with snow as a preservative.

Bacon's written works are a far nobler monument than his public career. Endowed with a sagacious mind, in which emotional qualities were quite dominated by purely intellectual ones, he was admirably fitted for the calm investigation of truth and the application of it in writing to a practical morality and the uses of daily life. His special contribution to science lay in his insistence upon the inductive method—the method of reasoning from patiently observed and classified phenomena. His purely philosophical and scientific treatises, such as the *Novum Organum* and others, which gave so marked a stimulus to scientific research, he preferred to write in Latin, as the more general and, in his belief, the more enduring language. But several works of importance, besides his *Essays*, were written in English. Such was the *Advancement of Learning*, which was published, with a dedication to the king, in 1605. In this book he argues, in a most elaborate and systematic manner, for the dignity of learning, and draws a comprehensive map of the field of knowledge,

both explored and unexplored, making "as it were a small globe of the intellectual world." The style is without any of Hooker's harmonies, but is everywhere dignified and vigorous, the efficient instrument of a masculine thinker; and the subject-matter is enlivened with a wealth of illustration, analogy, and anecdote. For a mellower tone, one should turn to his philosophical romance, the *New Atlantis*, another of those pictures of an ideal State of which there have been not a few, from Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* to William Morris's *A Dream of John Ball*.

The *Essays* have proved to be his most vital work. Ten were published in 1597, an enlarged edition in 1612, and a final edition, containing fifty-eight, the year before his death. They are brief discourses upon large and varied matters,—“dispersed meditations” which he hoped should be “as grains of salt” to sharpen and not sate the appetite. “Of Truth” is the first, “Of Vicissitude of Things” is the last, and between them is a wide range of themes, containing the fruits of a matured experience, always, he boasted, touching life more closely than books. This last point alone would account for their vitality. The style, too, though without special beauty, is admirable in its fitness; for style with Bacon was a flexible thing, adapting itself easily to his matter and purpose. In these *Essays*, where the matter is dispersed, immethodical, incomplete, the expression is concentrated in the extreme. The sentences may have little to do with each other, but every sentence is worthy of the man whose hearers, when he spoke, “could not cough or look aside without loss.”

“I cannot call Riches better than the baggage of virtue. The Roman word is better, *Impedimenta*. For as the baggage is to an army, so is riches to virtue. It cannot be spared, nor left behind, but it hindreth the march; yea, and the care of it sometimes loseth or disturbeth the victory. Of great riches there is no real use except it be in the distribution; the rest is but conceit. So saith Solomon: ‘Where much is, there are many to consume it; and what hath the owner but the sight of it with his eyes?’ The personal fruition in any man cannot reach to feel great riches: there is a custody of them, or a power of dole and donative of them, or a fame of them, but no solid

use to the owner. Do you not see what feigned prices are set upon little stones and rarities, and what works of ostentation are undertaken because there might seem to be some use of great riches? But then you will say, they may be of use to buy men out of dangers or troubles. As Solomon saith, 'Riches are as a stronghold in the imagination of the rich man.' But this is excellently expressed, that it is in imagination, and not always in fact. For certainly great riches have sold more men than they have bought out. Seek not proud riches, but such as thou mayest get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly."

The language is a little archaic. The ant "is a *shrewd* [mischievous] thing in an orchard or garden." "*Mean* [lowly] men, in their rising, must *adhere* [stand with a party]." Yet it is more modern, on the whole, than the average Elizabethan English, and may be read, with due allowance for the obscurity of its compression, without great difficulty. Of course, it is the matter of the essays that sustains their fame. Clear of local issues or temporary values, striking at once at the root of political and moral, if not exactly spiritual, verities, there seems no reason why they should not last with the political and moral institutions of men.

After Hooker and Bacon the age was not fruitful of important prose writers. But no account of it would be quite complete without the mention of Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), a curious book which still leads an antiquarian sort of existence. Burton was for fifty years an Oxford scholar of recluse habits, whose special "humour" was evidently melancholy. He endeavored, in his ponderous book, half philosophical, half medical, to "anatomize" melancholy, that is, to set forth all its causes, symptoms, and cures. But he fortifies himself with such a conglomerate mass of illustrations and quotations, largely Latin, drawn from his omnivorous reading, that the book often seems to be nothing but a meaningless medley. It really possesses method, though not style, and it has proved a great storehouse of materials for less learned writers; Keats, for instance, got from it the suggestion for his *Lamia*, while Sterne cribbed entire passages for his *Tristram Shandy*.

Robert
Burton,
1577-1640.

Nor must it be forgotten that the reign of James I. brought forth the book which, though not often treated merely as literature, is the foremost masterpiece of modern English prose. This is the "Authorized Version" of the Bible which was prepared by a number of scholars at King James's desire and published in 1611, rapidly superseding the various older versions upon which it was based. It requires no illustration, nor any comment beyond the simple statement that there is no English writer of importance from Milton and Bunyan to Macaulay and Ruskin who does not owe much of his power to the purity and dignified simplicity of this great model. It is one more monument, the last we have space for, of an age which built for itself so many and such splendid memorials.

CHAPTER XI

CAROLINE AND PURITAN PERIOD—AGE OF MILTON

1625-1660

<i>First Puritan Emigration to America</i>	1620	CRASHAW	French Academy
<i>Charles I.</i>	1625-1649	HERRICK	founded, 1635
<i>Petition of Right</i>	1629	COWLEY	Descartes
<i>Laud Archbishop of Canterbury</i>	1633	TAYLOR	Pascal
<i>Long Parliament</i>	1640	BROWNE	Corneille
<i>Battle of Naseby</i>	1645	WALTON	Calderon
<i>Commonwealth</i>	1649-1653	MILTON	Vandyke
<i>Protectorate</i>	1653-1659		Rembrandt
<i>Death of Cromwell</i>	1658		Claude Lorraine
			Velasquez

Though at the death of Queen Elizabeth, in 1603, the throne of England passed from the Tudors to the House of Stuarts, we have chosen in the preceding chapters to extend the term Elizabethan to cover what is sometimes known as the Jacobean period, or the entire reign of James I. This is because the earlier spirit did not die immediately—because the high ideals, the vigor of imagination, and the enthusiasm for action, which we associate with Elizabeth's reign, lasted well through the first quarter of the seventeenth century. But so much life and passion was certain to be followed by a reaction; when achievement lagged, as always, far behind expectation, men began to lose their heart for discovery and their zeal to create. Even early in the reign of the Stuarts may be detected the beginnings of such a change; and there needed only the mistaken policies of that House, working in fatal opposition to the will of the people, to complete the decline of the Elizabethan spirit, and establish, by the middle of the century, a very different one in its stead.

The changes that took place bore a twofold aspect, political and religious. James I. proved to be an arbitrary and unwise monarch, without Elizabeth's toleration and clear-sightedness, and by holding stubbornly to his theory of the divine right of kings he prepared the way for one of those popular risings by which from time to time the English nation has won the freedom it now enjoys. With political tyranny came religious tyranny, which grew especially severe in the reign of Charles I., who countenanced the notorious persecutions of Archbishop Laud. This tyranny bore hardest upon the Puritans, or extreme Protestants, who constituted then about three-fourths of the Protestants of England, and many of them fled to Holland and America. When finally the Civil War came, resulting in the victory of Cromwell's army, the execution of Charles, and the establishment of the Commonwealth, it was virtually Puritanism that ruled England.

Now the spirit of Puritanism was not the spirit of the Reformation from which it sprang. The Reformation of a century earlier had its liberal side; it was one manifestation of the broad Renaissance movement for freer and fuller life. It was this that had put the Bible into the hands of all the people, with the result sometimes of setting conscience at war with the Church. But the freedom that Puritanism stood for was freedom of conscience only, and with the majority of its adherents, who had little culture, it worked in direct opposition to the intellectual freedom and spirit of inquiry which marked the great minds of Elizabeth's age. Moreover, fixing its eyes steadfastly upon the future life, it was disposed to ignore or rebuke all activities that ministered only to the present. Thus it narrowed while it ennobled. Literature, art, and science suffered; enthusiasm for creation was chilled. The theatres, for instance, as being especially worldly, were given over to the more dissolute and frivolous classes, and when as a consequence the drama finally degenerated into mere horror and indecency, they were wholly suppressed. It was but natural that the literature of the period

should be for the most part either weakly imitative of the greatness that was past, or if strong in the element of religious fervor, too little likely to be supported by a free and vigorous art.

Of the drama, there is practically nothing to be said; there was, properly speaking, no Caroline drama. Although at the accession of Charles, in 1625, many of the Elizabethans were still producing plays, the best work was nearly all done; only Jonson, indeed, of the writers of the first class survived that date, and none of importance arose after it. And of course there was no Puritan drama; when the theatres were closed in 1642, the occupation of the playwright was gone. But the drama, in passing, gave place to an abundant outflow of lyric poetry, and this, though intrinsically inferior to the Elizabethan lyric poetry, demands some account; there was, moreover, some very important prose in this period; and there was the great Puritan writer of both poetry and prose, John Milton. We shall begin with the lyric poetry.

The term "metaphysical," borrowed from Dryden and applied by Doctor Johnson to certain minor poets of this period, expresses one of their characteristics. They showed a strong tendency to get "beyond nature," as it were,—to wander from the simple and sensuous matter of poetry into regions of subtle, speculative philosophy; so that to think and to elaborate their thought was for them more important than to see and to feel. But another term, which Milton applied to them, is still more distinctive: he called them "fantastic." The peculiarity which is thus described goes back to Elizabeth's day. We remember what Euphuism was in prose. Somewhat similarly there had arisen a false taste in poetry, a fondness for distorting the simplest ideas and overlaying them with fantastic images and phrases. "Conceits" these ornaments were called. An example is the passage in Chapman's *Homer* in which Hector is made to say that Troy "shall shed her towers for tears of overthrow." John Donne, who was a preacher in the reign of James I., and whose life spans the period from Elizabethan to Caroline times, was a

poet of really great gifts spoiled by metaphysical pedantry and conceits. If, indeed, Donne might be allowed to stand as high as his highest verse, as high even as so direct and arresting a quatrain as this,—

*John
Donne,
1573-1631.*

“I have done one braver thing
Than all the Worthies did!
And yet a braver thence doth spring;
Which is, To keep that hid!”—

we could scarcely call him a minor poet. In the treatment of his favorite themes of Love and Death, he has moments of rapt vision and of melancholy passion and power that place him almost among the great names. But he is continually wandering off into such dark realms of involved fancy that it is next to impossible to track him. Beyond question he was the king of the “metaphysicians.” He belonged most properly to the later Elizabethan or Jacobean period; he was writing even before the close of the sixteenth century, and his various songs, sonnets, elegies, divine poems, etc., seem to have been pretty generally known. But they were not published until 1633, after his death, and it was then that the influence of his weaker traits became most conspicuous, leaving a deep mark upon the poetry of his immediate successors.*

We may divide the Caroline school proper into several groups. One group, sometimes referred to as the “Sacred Poets,” consists of Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan, and others. Of these, Herbert is the most distinctly sacred, and has always been the most widely read. But for fluent verse and

* Donne is the author of the famous and really fine conceit of two lovers' souls:

“If they be two, they are two so
As stiff twin compasses are two;
Thy soul, the fix'd foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if th' other do.

“And though it in the centre sit,
Yet when the other far doth roam,
It leans and hearkens after it,
And grows erect as that comes home.”

The Italian poet, Marini (1569-1625), was also a conspicuous influence at this time, and “Marinism” is another word for strained metaphors and conceits.

flashes of real poetic fire, Crashaw takes a higher place. He is, at the same time, the best Caroline exponent of the tendencies described above. He was a Protestant clergyman's son who in later life became a Roman Catholic, and died in Italy, a canon of that Church. In 1646 was published his *Steps to the Temple*, a volume inspired by Herbert's *The Temple*. The same volume contained also some secular pieces, or "Delights of the Muses," among which is to be found his best known poem,—*Wishes*, he calls it, "to his supposed mistress,"

*The
Caroline
"Sacred
Poets."
Richard
Crashaw,
1613?–
1649.*

"Whoe'er she be,
That not impossible she
That shall command my heart and me."—

"Eyes, that displace
The neighbor diamond, and out-face
That sunshine, by their own sweet grace.

"Tresses, that wear
Jewels, but to declare
How much themselves more precious are....

"Life, that dares send
A challenge to his end,
And when it comes say, Welcome friend!....

"I wish her store
Of worth may leave her poor
Of wishes; and I wish——no more."

Here is evidence that fantasticality may pass, as in the fourth stanza, into the noblest of poetry, and that ingenuity and sincerity, as in the last, may sometimes meet.

The group to whom the name "Caroline" has been most specifically attached were writers in a much lighter vein: Herrick, Carew, Suckling, Lovelace, etc. They have sometimes been compared to Nero fiddling on the walls of burning Rome, so morally irresponsible do they seem, and so indifferent, in their verse at least, to Dissolutions of Parliament and Star

Chambers and all the terrible political and religious conflict impending. They found their themes for the most part in amatory praises of their mistress's cheeks, envy of her girdle, or complaints of her inconstancy, pursuing each idea with endless conceits, happy and ridiculous. To Suckling (*Ballad upon a Wedding*) belongs the fancy that,

*The
Amorists.
Robert
Herrick,
1591-1674.*

"Her feet beneath her petticoat
Like little mice stole in and out."

Lovelace can elaborate such a conceit as that his Ellinda's glove is a snowy farm with five tenements, yet in a moment of genuine inspiration (*Going to the Wars*) writes:

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more."

But Robert Herrick was the real prince of this cavalier tribe. His bachelor life was long, extending from the time of Shakespeare's earliest writings to the date of Milton's death, and was spent alternately in a Devonshire vicarage and the social world of London. His single volume, *Hesperides* (including a few religious poems, or "Noble Numbers"), was published in 1648, the year before the execution of Charles. As a volume, it is a threadless labyrinth, a confused collection of trifles, hundreds of them only two lines long, the longest little more than a hundred, couplets, epigrams, and odes, to and upon all sorts of things—*To Julia*, *To Bacchus*, *To Violets*, *To Fortune*, *Upon Love*, *Upon a Fly*, *Upon a Child*, *Upon many and many a Maid*.

"Cherry-ripe, ripe, ripe, I cry,
Full and fair ones; come and buy.
If so be you ask me where
They do grow? I answer, There,
Where my Julia's lips do smile,
There's the land, or cherry-isle,
Whose plantations fully show
All the year where cherries grow."

Just what it is that sets Herrick's verse apart from others',

making it, and leaving it still, the most charming light verse in the language, is not easy to say. Perhaps it is the careless rapture of a not too conscious and curious joy of life. The Elizabethan intensity has given way to something lower, but mostly gayer and occasionally even sweeter. A pastoral simplicity pervades it, with only a touch, in the background, of sadness,—of the spirit of

"Gather ye rose-buds while ye may,
Old time is still a-flying."

Somewhat by himself, confusing all schools, combining traits of the Elizabethan, Caroline, and Restoration periods, stands Abraham Cowley, in his own day a writer held in higher estimation than Milton. A royalist like most of the poets we have mentioned, he suffered virtual banishment during the Commonwealth. His celebrated volume, *The Mistress* (1647), was a collection of love poems that are now celebrated only for their pedantic conceits and astonishing absence of anything like the warmth of real love. Nobody professes to read them for pleasure. Cowley however is remembered for two things. Following the example of the minor poets, Waller and Denham, he used the old English couplet of Chaucer and Marlowe in an altered form, making it perfectly balanced and integrally complete, and leaving it so popular that for more than a century it was almost to crowd out other verse forms. The following lines from a poem on the death of Crashaw will illustrate:

"Hail, bard triumphant! and some care bestow
On us, the poets militant below! . .
Thou from low earth in nobler flames didst rise,
And like Elijah, mount alive the skies."

In the second place, in his so-called Pindarics, he set a fashion of writing odes in irregular lines and stanzas, which in the hands of Dryden, Wordsworth, and Tennyson was destined to bring forth some very great poems. He wrote also some essays in late life, in a prose that is distinctly modern and readable.

The prose writers of the period, as we view them now, were on the whole men of a larger mold. Their subjects were not often of such universal interest as Bacon's, they showed that they were still wrestling with a medium of expression that had not been subdued to perfect clearness and coherence, and they had their own foibles and conceits. They were prone to follow Burton's method of indiscriminate quotation, or resort to quips and trivial witticisms. Thomas Fuller, for instance, whom Lamb admired, has a reputation that depends almost wholly on his "quaintness." But into this category we cannot bring such men as Thomas Hobbes, the philosopher, Clarendon, the ever admirable historian of the Great Rebellion, nor the more distinctly literary writers, Jeremy Taylor, Sir Thomas Browne, and Izaak Walton.

Jeremy Taylor was a student at Cambridge at the same time as Milton, though in a different college. He took orders, and early attracted the attention of Archbishop Laud by his preaching; seems to have been a chaplain in the king's army; was forced into retirement in Wales during the Commonwealth, and several times suffered imprisonment; and after the Restoration was made a bishop in Ireland, where he died. Taylor's reputation, aside from that which attached to his extraordinary eloquence as a preacher, rests upon two books, *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying* (1650, 1651). The first is a practical manual of religious life. The second is a discourse on death, adorned with all the resources of his decidedly florid rhetoric, and made impressive with the rush and rhythm of his sentences. It is the most "poetical" prose (to use that word in a sense not entirely creditable to either prose or poetry) before the age of Burke.

"Reckon but from the sprightfulness of youth and the fair cheeks and full eyes of childhood . . . to the loathsomeness and horror of a three days' burial, and we shall perceive the distance to be very great and very strange. But so have I seen a rose newly springing

from the clefts of its hood, and, at first, it was fair as the morning, and full with the dew of heaven, as a lamb's fleece; but when a ruder breath had forced open its virgin modesty, and dismantled its too youthful and unripe retirements, it began to put on darkness, and to decline to softness and the symptoms of a sickly age; it bowed the head and broke its stalk, and at night, having lost some of its leaves and all its beauty, it fell into the portion of weeds and outworn faces."

Thomas Browne, knighted by Charles II., was an Oxford man who studied medicine, and after a period of travel passed a quiet life in the desultory practice of his profession at Norwich. Except perhaps for the *Religio Medici*, which was first printed without his knowledge in 1642, his writings reflect neither the temper nor the outward turmoil of the times. Even that book, which contains the mystic meditations of a mind both sceptical and religious, might have been written in any age. Students of literature, however, will turn more naturally to his *Urn-Burial*, 1658, a book which was inspired by the discovery of some ancient burial urns in Norfolk. The historical portion of the book is only an excuse for the meditative, and the real theme of it is "Vanity of vanities." In its five chapters are compressed some of the most searching thought and most wonderful prose in any language. It is not for the tyro; the compression, the subtlety, the strange Latin vocabulary, the sentences that seem to bend under their own weight, do not make easy reading. But for the cultivated literary palate, however jaded by cheaper stimulants, or by familiarity grown indifferent to things of finest taste, there is still stimulus here; and while the prose would never, like Taylor's, be called poetical, to the delicately attuned ear the march of these closely marshalled clauses will yield a keener delight than any poetry beneath Shakespeare and Milton.

"Pyramids, arches, obelisks, were but the irregularities of vain-glory, and wild enormities of ancient magnanimity. . . . To subsist in lasting monuments, to live in their productions, to exist in their names and predicament of chimæras, was large satisfaction unto old expectations, and made one part of their Elysiums. But all this is

nothing in the metaphysics of true belief. To live indeed, is to be again ourselves, which being not only an hope, but an evidence in noble believers, 'tis all one to lie in St. Innocents' churchyard, as in the sands of Egypt. Ready to be anything, in the ecstasy of being ever, and as content with six foot as the *moles* of Adrianus."

• Izaak Walton is one of not a few instances in literature, of a man, without special scholarship or literary training, writing a book that becomes a classic, beloved of all readers.

Izaak Walton, 1593-1683. He was a London shopkeeper, devoted, through all the turbulence of the times, to tranquillity and the cultivation of good friends and good books. His

writing was done in what would have been late life to a shorter-lived man. He published *The Complete Angler* at the age of sixty, in the year when Cromwell assumed the protectorate (1653). Besides this he wrote, over a period of forty years, five brief *Lives*—of Donne, Hooker, Herbert, etc.—which are among the first real biographies in our literature. But the very pleasant, and also practical, treatise on angling is his great book. It is cast in the form of a conversation, in the simplest style, with a background of clear streams and honeysuckle hedges delicately touched in, and breathes everywhere the meek spirit of the man who asked no better gifts of Heaven than "flowers, and showers, and meat, and content, and leisure to go a-fishing."

"And, let me tell you, this kind of fishing with a dead rod, and laying night-hooks, are like putting money to use; for they both work for the owners when they do nothing but sleep, or eat, or rejoice, as you know we have done this last hour, and sat as quietly and as free from cares under this sycamore, as Virgil's Tityrus and his Melibœus did under their broad beech-tree. No life, my honest scholar, no life so happy and so pleasant as the life of a well-governed angler; for when the lawyer is swallowed up with business, and the statesman is preventing or contriving plots, then we sit on cowslip-banks, hearing the birds sing, and possess ourselves in as much quietness as these silent silver streams, which we now see glide so quietly by us."

For the Puritan side of this divided age, the name of John Milton stands, in literature, almost alone; Marvell, Milton's



IZAACK WALTON
ROBERT HERRICK

JOHN BUNYAN
JOHN MILTON

friend, once regarded as a very great poet, is so regarded no longer, and Bunyan belongs to another generation. Milton was

born in Bread Street, London, in the year 1608. He came, he tells us, "of an honest (*i. e.*, honorable) family;" his father was a scrivener. His university education was obtained at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he became M. A. in his twenty-fourth year. The six years following he spent at his father's country place in Buckinghamshire, pursuing his favorite classical, mathematical, and musical studies. In 1638 he set out for two years of foreign travel, passing through Paris and Nice to Genoa, Pisa, Florence, Rome, and Naples, making by the way friends of various celebrated men. The remainder of his life was passed in London.

He was a Puritan, like his father, and a republican of an unbendingly stern moral temper softened only by his literary and artistic tastes. He wrote constantly in behalf of the Puritan cause; he defended the execution of Charles; he was Latin Secretary under the Commonwealth and under Cromwell, engaged in carrying on diplomatic correspondence. Thus the middle portion of his active life was spent in the service of the state, and, as we shall see, not without lasting results in the service of universal freedom. The Restoration naturally forced him into retirement, but fortunately left him unmolested for the still higher service of the Heavenly Muse. The other events of main importance in the chronicle of his life are his three marriages, one before and two after his blindness, and the blindness itself, which, brought on by arduous midnight studies pursued "from twelve years of age," overtook him in the year 1652.

The periods of Milton's literary work are pretty sharply definable. There were an early and a late period of poetry, and between them a period of political and polemic prose.

His Prose. It will be as well to consider this middle period first, since it had not so much his love as the mere devotion of a mind steadfast to its principles. He had cut short his travels in 1639, denying himself a visit to Greece, because, he

says, "I thought it base to be travelling for amusement abroad while my fellow-citizens were fighting for liberty at home." His own best fighting was done in the scholar's way, with the pen, and the twenty years between 1641 and 1660 brought forth various tracts, both in English and in Latin, on reformation, prelacy, divorce, etc. The interest of their matter is chiefly historical, and the manner is often so bitterly controversial, not to say scurrilous, that we might well wish to pass them by. But something in the manner challenges regard, and besides, there are two, the *Tract on Education* and the *Areopagitica* (both 1644) which neither matter nor manner permits us to ignore. The former, though professing to be only a hasty and unstudied letter, sets forth with rare discernment a kind of ideal curriculum for the education of youth. As the full scope of it, from grammar and arithmetic to architecture, navigation, fencing, and singing, gradually breaks on the reader's view and he realizes in all its hasty presentation that this is indeed "not a bow for every man to shoot in that counts himself a teacher," he begins to feel what John Fiske calls the cosmic vastness of Milton—the sense, in dealing with him, of "a world on our hands." The *Areopagitica* is the famous plea for unlicensed printing, the noblest and perhaps the most powerful document on the freedom of the press ever penned. Lovers of liberty have long been wont to stamp upon their memory its best passages.

"For books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."

The "something in the manner" of all this prose is simply

the impress of Milton's character. The prose itself is no better formed than most English prose had been for a century, and that is not saying much. It is not so well formed as Bacon's. Milton acknowledged that he had in it but the use, as it were, of his "left hand." His English structure is not freed from the bondage of Latin involution. "And me perhaps each of these dispositions may have at other times seriously affected" he will write, as if he were writing Latin, or poetry. In his flights of eloquence, moreover, he is never secure from fall. It is clear that he does not care enough about the form to study his harmonies. But the passion of his purpose shines everywhere through, and while the rhythm and even the imaginative beauty of his best passages may perhaps be paralleled, the torrential eloquence of them cannot, simply because the vehement spirit of Milton is without parallel among the writers of our prose. Thus he stands, with Taylor and Browne, the third, and certainly not the least, in the great triumvirate of Caroline prose eloquence.

It was poetry, however, to which Milton felt that he was especially "led by the genial power of nature," and he had begun to write it in his early Cambridge days. The hymn

*His minor
Poetry.*

On the Morning of Christ's Nativity was composed in his twenty-first year. But the period most fruitful of lyric poetry was the time of his retirement in the country. Even if *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* were written earlier, which is not probable (the date assigned is 1632), *Comus* and *Lycidas* date certainly from 1634 and 1637.* To these, to complete the list of Milton's important minor poems, should be added the *Sonnets*, most of which were composed in the middle or prose period of his life, and the stern scriptural drama of *Samson Agonistes* (1671), which, with the great epics, was the product of his latter years, and in spirit is much more akin to those epics than to the spontaneity and exuberance of his early work.

As their Italian titles indicate, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*

* *Comus* was published in 1637, *Lycidas* in 1638. There was a collective edition of the minor poems in 1645.

set forth the moods respectively of a man giving himself over to "heart-easing Mirth," and of one devoting himself to the soberer delights of meditation—to "divinest Melancholy." They are written in an appropriate verse,—for the most part in the free octosyllabic, or rather four-stress, couplet, the lines of which are satisfied as often with seven syllables as with eight; and they are throughout remarkable alike for their sustained lyric grace and for the almost bewildering succession of phrases and images that at once convey and adorn the central theme. So perfect, indeed, are these latter that they have nearly all strayed outside of the poems and familiarized themselves to our ears from a thousand extraneous sources, until such phrases as "soft Lydian airs," or "the tale of Troy divine," or "the studious cloister's pale" have become a part of our common stock.

Comus is a poem of rather more substance, being a masque composed in honor of the Earl of Bridgewater, and presented by the children of the Earl when he entered upon the Presidency of Wales. It is the story of a maiden lost in a forest and captured by Comus, a base magician, who tries to transform her into a monster like those which make up his own brutish rout, but whose enchantments she overcomes by her native purity. The poem belongs, in fact, with the half masques, half lyrical dramas, of Jonson and Fletcher, and owes something in particular to the latter's *Faithful Shepherdess*. But no masque before it ever had quite such a poet to help out with quite such poetry the music and dancing. On its sensuous side, it is a thing of air and light, of color and odor, lulling the spirit into soft accord with "jocund Spring" and "the rosy-bosomed Hours." Yet "divine philosophy" is not forgotten. The Lady who resists the enticements of Comus and his crew is the type of that virtue that can

"see to do what virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk."

If the poem have a serious fault, it lies in the enforcement of its moral beyond the proper function of a masque,

Lycidas is the first, and perhaps still the foremost, of the three or four great elegies, including Shelley's *Adonais* and Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, which enrich our literature. Edward King, a fellow-student of Milton's, was drowned at sea, and a memorial volume was prepared by his friends. *Lycidas* was the concluding piece in this tribute. The pastoral imagery employed in it can not be held to detract from its sincerity any more than metre and rhyme themselves, while to those who are familiar with the classical convention it is a genuine source of charm. No piping poet-shepherds since Theocritus have "touched the tender stops of various quills" to sweeter notes or more haunting cadences. There is only the corrupt herdmen's grating on "scrannel pipes of wretched straw" for discord, a prelude of the discord soon to become so harsh in English Church and State and in Milton's life. For the poem, it should be added, departs from its primary elegiac purpose, and under the symbolism of the shepherds and their flocks Milton took occasion to denounce in no measured terms the flagrant corruption of the clergy.

The scant score of his *Sonnets* were written for the most part as they were called forth by incidents in the poet's life, celebrating here a friendship, lifting there a voice in appeal or protest on public affairs. In the sonnet *To the Nightingale*, for instance, it is the youthful poet that speaks; in those *To Cromwell* and *On the Late Massacre in Piedmont*, the religious enthusiast; in that *On his Blindness*, the poet again, bowing beneath afflictions from within and without. They are uneven in merit; Doctor Johnson and his century made light of them; but the best are so filled with the majesty of Milton, that Wordsworth's verdict—"Soul-animating strains—alas, too few!"—will henceforth surely stand.

"When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent

To serve therewith my Maker, and present
 My true account, lest he returning chide;
 'Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?'
 I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
 That murmur, soon replies, 'God doth not need
 Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
 Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
 They also serve who only stand and wait.' "

(On His Blindness.)

That Milton's lyric poetry marks any advance upon the Elizabethan it would not do to say. It is enough if Milton sometimes reached the high level of Spenser and Shakespeare in what was the supreme excellence of the one, and one of the supreme excellences of the other. Moreover, his note was his own, and he is second only to Spenser in his influence upon the lyric poets that have followed. There are few traces of the vices of his age—here and there a conceit, it may be, a little exuberance, a little over-classicism. But he eschews trivialities and subtleties, and though often sensuous in the extreme, as enamored of beauty as any child of the Renaissance, he is never in a single word sensual or indelicate. He rises clear in his Puritan robes above both the religious mystics and the courtly amorists of a much divided and troubled age.

Leaving now this lyric verse, we come to the great epic with which Milton crowned his life and work. *Paradise Lost* is the product of his third period. The date of its publication, 1667, puts it after the Restoration, but there is no real reason for classing it with Restoration literature. Even before his enforced retirement, Milton's blindness had practically put an end to all intellectual progress save in the wisdom that matures by meditation. He turned then instinctively to the passion of his youth, becoming once more a poet, sobered indeed by the years of civil and religious strife, but suffering no abatement of zeal. His love of beauty that had

borne flower in ode and masque now gave place to a passion for something higher and holier, and he sought a theme commensurate with his ripened powers. As early as the time of his Italian travels he had contemplated writing an epic of King Arthur. But more and more he was drawn to sacred subjects and finally fixed upon the Fall of Man. The actual composition of the poem seems to have begun about 1658, and tradition has fondly pictured the sightless poet dictating the successive portions to his daughters. Though still young for such service, it is not impossible that they gave some of the assistance, both in reading and writing, which was constantly required. The first draft of the poem may have been finished by 1663 or 1665, but publication was delayed by the Great Plague, the Great Fire, and the difficulties of licensing. In 1667 it was issued, in ten books, and the author received for it just ten pounds. A second edition, arranged in twelve books as at present, was printed in the last year of his life. Meanwhile, in 1671, together with *Samson Agonistes*, appeared the four books of *Paradise Regained*. This sequel, however, which recounts Christ's resistance to the temptation in the wilderness, is intrinsically of lesser poetic interest, and contains no merit that is not more conspicuous in the larger poem. The verse of both is blank iambic pentameter, which Milton had already used in *Comus*, and which he employed now in the conviction that rhyme was "the invention of a barbaric age," of no true musical delight. Perhaps he felt, too, that his subject demanded larger freedom. He certainly made a virtually new instrument for his needs. He shunned the extreme license of the dramatists, keeping his lines always well girt, yet distributing accents and pauses with consummate cunning. This, together with the splendor of his diction and the stateliness of his inverted and involved style, yields a verse which in its own quality remains unexcelled, and which, though technically the same as the dramatic blank verse, we must forever distinguish as "epic" or "Miltonic"—the verse of the "mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies," the "God-gifted organ-voice of England."

The majesty of the invocation which announces the theme of *Paradise Lost* is remarkably sustained through the ten thousand and more lines that follow:—

“Of Man’s first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
Brought death into the World, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
Rose out of Chaos.”

The scene of the epic, or drama, as one is constantly tempted to call it, is the Universe at the time of the creation,—Heaven, Hell, and the Eden of the new-made Earth. Satan and the host of rebel angels, cast out from heaven, plot the downfall of man in revenge for their own overthrow. In pursuit of his purpose, the Tempter makes his way into Paradise; and the poet rehearses, with pomp and circumstance, in his lofty verse, the simple story of the third chapter of Genesis. The supernatural elements are conceived on a colossal scale. The Universal Infinitude is mapped out into The Empyrean, Chaos, and Hell, with The World, or Starry Universe, occupying a small circumscribed and almost central position, as marked out by the golden compasses of the Son:—

“One foot he centred, and the other turned
Round through the vast profundity obscure,
And said, ‘Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds;
This be thy just circumference, O World.’”

(VII. 228-231.)

The outcast Angels fall for nine days, and for nine days more lie confounded, “rolling in the fiery gulf” of Hell. The huge council-chamber of Pandemonium rises out of the earth “like an exhalation.” When Satan has winged his difficult way again upward through Chaos, he spies, beneath the empyreal Heaven,

“hanging in a golden chain,
This pendent World, in bigness as a star
Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.”

(II. 1051-1053.)

Yet in Paradise itself we find the natural world of “lawns, or level downs, and flocks Grazing the tender herb;” of “Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose;” of vernal airs and trembling leaves and murmuring waters; of all kinds of living creatures, and in their midst

“Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
God-like erect, with native honor clad,
In naked majesty.”

(IV. 288-290.)

It will be seen by what means Milton has made an impressive and to many even fascinating poem out of material which, as Dr. Johnson says, is wholly wanting in human interest. He brought to it an imagination equal to the utmost scope of his celestial machinery, so that immeasurable spaces and illimitable æons are in his hands as bricks and mortar in the hands of a builder. He ransacks the forests of Norway, the mines of India, the magnificence of Babylon, for images and comparisons. He tirelessly searches both history and fable and brings spoil of heroic deeds and sounding names from classic and Biblical lore. He measures his syllables, his inverted phrases, his involved sentences, with the ear of one to whom the rarest music is native, and his blank verse marches in bars and slips into cadences that ask no help of rhyme. Yet through all the mazes of music and imagery, such as might well bewilder a less consecrated poet, he keeps before him the stern purpose of his poem, to “justify the ways of God to man.” We follow the story to the end, witness the fall of our First Parents from their happy state, hear their half-vain repentance, listen to the doom of mortality and expulsion from Paradise, and attend in not un comforted sorrow as the Archangel Michael and the flaming sword lead them without the eastern gate, where

"They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way."

(XII. 648, 649.)

As beauty is the dominant quality of Milton's early poetry sublimity is the dominant quality here. It is seen in the spaciousness of the setting, the vastness of the more than planetary abysses that are unfolded, where height and depth and every other creature known to the soaring imagination dwell. It is seen in the imaginative sweep of history and legend. It is felt in the very harmonies of the verse, wherein diphthong and liquid conspire to make music even of otherwise superfluous proper names. But more than all else it is felt in the exalted tone of the poem, the "high seriousness," which, says Matthew Arnold, was beyond the reach of Chaucer, but was given to poets like Homer and Shakespeare, Dante and Milton. In pure moral loftiness indeed, we must account Dante and Milton supreme, the one the poet of mediæval Europe, the other of Puritan England.

CHAPTER XII

THE RESTORATION AND THE REVOLUTION—AGE OF DRYDEN

1660-1700

<i>Charles II.</i> 1660-85	(MILTON'S <i>Paradise Lost</i>)	Molière
<i>Great Plague</i> 1665	BUNYAN	Racine
<i>London Fire</i> 1666	BUTLER	La Fontaine
<i>Triple Alliance</i> 1668	PEPYS	Boileau
" <i>Popish Plot</i> .".....1678	EVELYN	Bossuet
<i>Rye House Plot</i> 1683	TEMPLE	Fénelon
<i>James II.</i> 1685-88	LOCKE	Spinoza
<i>The "Bloody Assizes"</i> 1685	COMIC DRAMATISTS	Leibnitz
<i>Declaration of Rights</i> 1689	DRYDEN	Murillo
<i>William and Mary</i> 1689-1702		Dictionary of
<i>Battle of the Boyne</i> 1690		the French
		Academy

After the death of Cromwell the Protectorate failed to afford a stable government and was followed in 1660 by the restoration of the Stuarts in the person of Charles II. The history of the succeeding thirty or forty years was in many respects a repetition of what had gone before. The Stuart rule meant tyranny, and also a wavering between the Protestant and Catholic forms of worship, with a leaning toward the latter that bred discontent in the strong Protestant element. When the second James followed the second Charles, the discontent came to a head. James's reign was short. The Revolution of 1688 set William of Orange and Mary (the daughter of James) on the throne, and England, which had already formed a Triple Alliance with The Netherlands and Sweden, now joined in the Great Alliance of the Protestant powers of Europe against France. At the same time the Declaration of Rights accepted by William, guaranteed once more the powers of Parliament and the liberties of the people.

Charles II. was himself a good-humored king, whose despotic traits scarcely showed themselves through the early part of his twenty-five years' reign. Brave, gay, witty, and indolent, he was devoted almost wholly to his personal pleasure, bringing with him from the continent, where he had mostly lived since the fall of his father, the dissolute manners of the French court. But however popular he may have been with certain courtiers, his selfishness could mean no good to the people. The essential want of harmony between king and subjects, which resulted in more or less treasonable plots, with the outward calamities—the Great Plague which in 1665 swept away a third of the population of London, the Great Fire of the following year, and disasters on the sea—combined to make this a sad period for England. It was in Charles II.'s reign that the name Tory was first applied to the court party—the old Cavaliers, or Royalists; and Whig to the country party—the Roundheads, or Puritans.

Literary history would not have a great deal to record of the earlier years of the Restoration, had not Milton, in the obscurity of his retirement, composed the great poem we have already described—a poem which this age, if it may be said to have produced it at all, produced only to its own contrasted dishonor. A few of the cavalier singers, the "Caroline lines" of the first Charles, were alive and not quite tuneless. Samuel Butler, a Caroline of the second, lampooned the Parliamentary party and the Puritans in his long and immensely popular poem of *Hudibras* (1663–1678), which gave the language a new adjective, as it gave literature scores of epigrammatic short couplets which no satirist in the same kind has surpassed.* Samuel Pepys, a busy and observing clerk in the navy department, kept, during the first ten years

*Samuel
Butler,
1612–1680.
Samuel
Pepys,
1633–1703.*

* Example of the Hudibrastic couplet, or distich:—

"For those that fly may fight again,
Which he can never do that's slain."

of the Restoration, a minute *Diary* in cipher, which was published in 1825, and which, by its interesting revelations, political and personal, raises the author to a position of historical and literary importance.* A little later, Sir William Temple attained eminence as a writer of polished essays; and John Locke published his great essay on *The Human Understanding* (1690), in which the theory is upheld that all knowledge is derived from experience, a theory quite in accord with Bacon's insistence upon the experimental method in science. Throughout the period there was a revived activity in the drama, but never,

The Comic Dramatists. perhaps, has the rule of extremes in reaction been better exemplified than in the character of the stage-plays which became popular after the twenty years' suppression of the theatres. The Restoration drama, as exhibited by the comedies of Etherege, Wycherley, Congreve, and others, is synonymous with all that is impudently witty, irreverent, and licentious, and marks the lowest stage of morality, or immorality, which that kind of writing in English has reached. Some very good tragedy, however, was written by Otway and Dryden, and indeed Dryden is in every way the great redeeming figure of the age. He belongs, however, in his best work, to the latter part of it, and represents so fully the new spirit that before considering him we must take note of a prose writer in whom the lingering Puritan spirit was still represented, and who, as a matter of fact, has always been more widely read than any of the newer school, not excluding Dryden himself.

John Bunyan was born at Elstow, near Bedford, some forty miles north of London, in the year 1628. He was thus twenty years younger than Milton, and his early manhood fell in the

* Example of the matter and style of Pepys's *Diary*:—

"So I forced the watermen to land us on Redriffe side, and so walked together till Sir W. Warren and I parted near his house and thence I walked quite over the fields home by light of link, one of my watermen carrying it, and I reading by the light of it, it being a very fine, clear, dry night. So to Captain Cocke's, and there sat and talked, especially with his Counsellor, about his prize goods, that has done him good turn; here I supped and so home to bed, with great content that the plague is decreased to 152, the whole being but 330."

time of the Commonwealth, his maturer years in that of the Restoration. His father was a tinker, an occupation then held in low repute. His schooling was carried no farther than reading and writing, and was very poor at that; he never wrote a good hand, nor learned to spell.

John Bunyan,
1628-1688.

Doubtless he ran wild among the village youth, but his badness seems to have consisted chiefly in swearing, the other sins of which his over-tender conscience accuses him, bell-ringing, dancing, and the like, being comparatively trivial. He served a while as a soldier, but whether in the Parliamentary army we cannot be certain. He married a woman as poor as himself, who brought him for dowry the memory of a godly father and two books, "The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven" and "The Practice of Piety." Perhaps it is not too fanciful to see in the titles of these books the origin, even to the alliteration, of the title of his own great book.

The more intimate life of Bunyan is faithfully set forth in his *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (1666), one of the most intensely vivid spiritual records ever written. Almost every page reveals the sensitiveness of his conscience, his trials by temptation, his wrestlings with voices and visions.

"But the same day [Sabbath], as I was in the midst of a game at Cat, and having struck it one blow from the Hole, just as I was about to strike it the second time, a Voice did suddenly dart from Heaven into my Soul, which said, *Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to Heaven, or have thy sins and go to Hell?* At this I was put to an exceeding Maze. Wherefore, leaving my Cat upon the ground, I looked up to Heaven, and was as if I had, with the Eyes of my understanding, seen the Lord Jesus looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if he did severely threaten me with some grievous Punishment for these and other my ungodly Practices."

Such a temperament could lead to but one issue. After his conversion he went about the midland counties preaching, at the same time practicing the craft which he had learned of his father. But because he was a Nonconformist and because at the Restoration the laws against unlicensed preaching were

severely enforced, he was arrested and thrown into Bedford jail. There he remained for twelve years, one of thousands in like condition throughout England, until the suspension of the laws in 1672. He then resumed his preaching. His fame spread, for his gift was really marvellous; a chapel was built for him at Bedford; and he sometimes went to London, where great crowds came to hear him. He died, at the age of sixty, of a fever brought on by his faithful ministrations.

But Bunyan's fame, even in his lifetime, did not depend on his preaching alone. He was an industrious writer, for all his want of training or technical skill. He had published several tracts before his imprisonment. The later *Grace Abounding*, mentioned above, went through several editions in the year of its publication. Besides this, there were the *Life and Death of Mr. Badman* (1680), a realistic story in dialogue form, and the *Holy War* (1682), an allegory inferior only to *The Pilgrim's Progress*. But *The Pilgrim's Progress*, then as now, eclipsed all the rest. It was written in prison, possibly during a short period of later imprisonment. At any rate, it appeared first in 1678 (second part 1684). Bunyan had had, as constant companions during his confinement, Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* and the Bible; and to these two books his own pen added a third which in popularity and influence speedily took rank with them. For more than a century, it is true, it remained a cottagers' book only—the learned held it in contempt; but simple and learned now unite in praising it.

"As I walk'd through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a Den, and I laid me down in that place to sleep; and as I slept, I dreamed a Dream."

Thus it opens, in very Dantesque fashion;* and the character of the allegory at once suggests comparison with the *Divine Comedy*, and with that other great allegory of Christendom,

* "Midway upon the Journey of our life
I found myself within a forest dark,
For the straightforward pathway had been lost."

—*Inferno*: Longfellow's translation.

Spenser's *Faërie Queene*. But those were both conscious literary productions in a sense in which this was not. We feel that Bunyan's book wrote itself, and it is idle to look farther than the Bible for model or inspiration.

"It came from mine own heart, so to my head,
And thence into my fingers trickled."

We see everywhere the same imagination that in his earlier books had pictured himself in his sins "as on a miry Bog that shook if I did but stir," and likened the desires of his evil heart to "a Clog on the Leg of a Bird to hinder her from flying." The pictures are bitten in as with acid, as indeed they had been bitten into his own mind with the acid of sharp experience. Imaginations like Dante's and Bunyan's have this way. They see things with a terrible intensity and reality; and just as the nine circles of hell wound visibly beneath Dante's feet, or as the twelve gates of the heavenly Jerusalem glistened before the eyes of John the Apostle, so did the Slough of Despond spue out its filth before Bunyan, and the Valley of Death spread its shadows, and the Delectable Mountains lift their vineyards. The wonder of it is that he could take the simple facts of his very simple life, the roads and sheep-trails that he had travelled, the fields and fogs that he knew, the markets and fairs where he had plied his trade, the men and women of his acquaintance, and weave them into an allegory of the soul's progress that should be as true for ten thousand men as it was for him, and yet sacrifice nothing of the native distinctness of these facts. Once more in the history of the world's literature, allegory has almost belied its name. In a truer sense than even Milton's magnificent epics of *Paradise*, is this *Pilgrim's Progress* in homespun prose the great poem of English Puritanism.

While the literature of Puritanism was pursuing thus, so to speak, its underground way—Milton, in blindness and retirement, and Bunyan, in a common prison, recording each the visions that visited their sorely tried spirits—the literature of

court and castle, of the universities and theatres and coffee houses, went gaily on. The leader of the group to whom in this age fell the honor of carrying forward the torch that had been handed on from the Elizabethans by the Caroline poets and Cowley and Waller, was unquestionably John Dryden. The torch, it should be said in passing, had been relighted at a different fire, but the account of that may for the present be deferred.

Dryden, who was born in Northamptonshire, came of a family of Puritan sympathies. One of his earliest poems, written shortly after he left Cambridge, was an elegy upon the death of Cromwell. But when the political stress seemed to demand the recall of Charles, Dryden changed heart with the nation and celebrated the Restoration in the heroic couplets of his *Astræa Redux* (1660). His first important poem was his *Annus Mirabilis* (1667). The "year of wonders" celebrated by this poem was the year 1666, the year of the Dutch War and of the London Fire, both of which events the poet managed to turn to the glory of England and her king. For instance, when the latter is pictured as coming forth to view the fire, exposing to the driving sparks his "sacred face"—

"More than his guards his sorrows made him known,
And pious tears which down his cheeks did shower;
The wretched in his grief forgot their own;
So much the pity of a king has power."

The poem as a whole is confused, and disfigured by affectations, but it shows smoothness of versification, occasionally rare dignity, and always surprising neatness in turning a fine fancy.

Dryden was then "Mr. Dryden the poet,"* a Fellow of the Royal Society, living in London, married to the daughter of an

* "In Covent Garden to-night, going to fetch home my wife, I stopped at the great Coffee House there, where I never was before; where Dryden, the poet I knew at Cambridge, and all the wits of the town. . . . And had I had time then, or could at other times, it will be good coming thither; for there, I perceive is very witty and pleasant discourse."—PEPYS'S *Diary*, Feb. 3, 1664. Dryden soon came to be the presiding genius of this particular coffee house, which was later known as Will's.

earl, and soon to be appointed Historiographer Royal and Poet Laureate. For fifteen years, however, he turned aside from poetry proper to the drama, apparently more for reasons of prosperity than from personal preference. In this period he wrote nearly a score of plays, both comedies and tragedies, bad and good, but few of the first order. In comedy, he was excelled by the comic dramatists who have before been mentioned. He could not compete with them in wit, though he endeavored to in impudence. His tragi-comedy, *The Maiden Queen* (1667), scored a great success; and his tragedy, *All For Love* (1678), marks perhaps the greatest height to which the tragic drama of the period reached. The last named challenges comparison with Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, of which, both in subject and style, it is partly an imitation. This dramatic work is interesting as showing a great change in Dryden's theories and tastes.* He began with a devotion to rhyme, after the fashion of the French drama, and wrote his tragedies or tragic parts in heroic couplets, stoutly defending this style in the face of ridicule. He even turned *Paradise Lost* into a rhymed play. But after a time he confessed to having grown "weary of his long-loved mistress, Rhyme," and returned to the native English blank-verse freedom. It was then that he wrote *All for Love*, the success of which certainly vindicated his changed faith. This play shows his real admiration for Shakespeare, but it shows also his adherence to the important tenets of the French stage. The classical "unities" are kept in mind. The action is more restricted, both in time and place, than in *Antony and Cleopatra*,

* Malherbe, the court poet of France, who was contemporary with Shakespeare, had long before "regulated" French verse by insisting upon a simple style, the clear expression of a few orderly ideas, a Parisian purity of diction, mathematical precision of metre, and perfect rhyme. Boileau, the contemporary of Dryden, upheld the same principles in his famous *Art of Poetry* (1674). At the same time the French drama, in the hands of Corneille and Racine, had become thoroughly classical in its observance of the unities and other self-imposed laws, attaining to that ideal which Jonson almost alone among Elizabethan English dramatists had approached to. In Dryden's time this French influence was especially strong. (Compare what is said at the beginning and end of Chapter XIII.)

and the characters are throughout impelled by a single motive.

The second, and a much more important, period of Dryden's literary career began with his return to poetry proper in 1681, when he was in his fiftieth year. This is the date of *Satires, etc.* his first great satire, *Absalom and Achitophel*. The time was one of political unrest, of "popish" plots and the like, caused by the dissatisfaction of the Protestants over the prospect that James, the king's brother, who was a Catholic, would succeed to the throne. A strong Opposition, led by the Earl of Shaftesbury, favored the Duke of Monmouth, the king's illegitimate son. It was this situation which gave Dryden the occasion of his satire. Absalom, in the Bible chronicle, is an undutiful son in rebellion against King David, his father. Absalom was made to stand allegorically for Monmouth, and Absalom's evil counsellor Achitophel for Shaftesbury. The poem, composed in the heroic couplets which had served tragedy so ill but which are peculiarly suited to epigrammatic and satiric verse, sprang into immediate popularity. The next year appeared another satire aimed at Shaftesbury, called *The Medal*; and later was published a second part of *Absalom and Achitophel*. Meanwhile, bitter replies had been evoked, one from the rather dull poet and playwright, Thomas Shadwell. Dryden immediately turned upon Shadwell, and immortalized his dulness in *MacFlecknoe* (1682). Five years later, when James II. was on the throne and Dryden had become a professed Roman Catholic, he used the same instrument of incisive heroics for the religious allegory of *The Hind and the Panther* (1687), in which the "milk-white Hind" that,

"immortal and unchanged,
Fed on the lawns and in the forest ranged,"

is the Church of Rome, and the Panther is the Church of England. Dryden was then, in spite of the many attacks to which his political and religious verse subjected him, almost as much of an autocrat in London letters as Ben Jonson had been three

quarters of a century before, or as Samuel Johnson was to be three quarters of a century afterward.

The Revolution of 1688, the dethronement of James, and the accession of William and Mary, deprived Dryden at once of his public offices and his income. Much as he had hitherto shown a disposition to veer with the wind of royal favor, it was quite impossible that he should recant again and become a Protestant adherent of the throne. There was nothing for him but retirement and literature. Thus there was a third period in his life, as remarkably productive in its way as the others had been. He wrote more plays, and then turned his attention to translation, a favorite occupation of the declining years of men of letters. The satires of Juvenal and Persius, and the poems of Virgil, were thus translated. This was little more than very good hack-work. But better work, indeed the very flower of all followed. In the last year of his life he published the volume known as *Fables*. Translations, he called them, "from Homer, Ovid, Boccaccio, and Chaucer." They are better called paraphrases, since Dryden has retold the stories with the utmost freedom. The best is the moving love story of *Palamon and Arcite*, Chaucer's *Knights Tale*. Besides these, the volume included some wholly original poems, among them the second Ode for St. Cecilia's Day, a "Pindaric" composed for the festival of a London musical society in 1697. He had written a similar song ten years before, but the second, which is called *Alexander's Feast*, is the greater, rising again and again to heights of lyric rhapsody:—

"The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
Of Bacchus ever fair and ever young.
The jolly god in triumph comes;
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;
Flushed with a purple grace
He shows his honest face:
Now give the hautboys breath; he comes, he comes.
Bacchus, ever fair and young,

Drinking joys did first ordain;
 Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
 Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
 Rich the treasure,
 Sweet the pleasure,
 Sweet is pleasure after pain."

Dryden is one of those men of letters who to-day live more in their fame than in the popularity of their works. The number of his readers is small compared with the readers of Milton or Bunyan. Nevertheless his place in literature is secure, and the character and influence of his work cannot be lightly passed by. His place is in the porch of the classical edifice which the next century reared. We have intimated that though he stood in the line of direct English succession, he and his group departed materially from the traditions of his predecessors. The reigning classicism of French literature was, as we have said, the immediate foreign influence, though this only fell in with tendencies already existing in England. Something of the spirit, the fire, the freedom, of an earlier time remained with Dryden, and to it we owe many a splendid outburst in his poetry. But for the most part he stood by the somewhat artificial standards which he adopted or which his critical theories helped to create. In other words, he was disposed to prescribe laws to poetry—to regulate it. The new couplet which he took from Waller and Cowley was a regulated thing, which Pope, as we shall see, was to regulate still farther.* It differed from the old couplet, not in actual number of stresses, but in the greater uniformity of beat, balance of parts, and unity of the whole. Dryden's experiments with it served to show clearly its bounds. For expansive poetry, lyric or tragic, it was unsuited. But for straight-away narrative or didactic verse it was good; while for the vigor of invective or the pungency of

*Character-
istics and
Influence.*

*" Waller was smooth; but Dryden taught to join
 The varying verse, the full-resounding line,
 The long majestic march, and energy divine."—POPE.

Dryden frequently varied his couplets with triplets and with Alexandrines.

pointed satire it was absolutely the best instrument ever devised.

Such adherence to formality carried with it a restriction of matter and theme, if indeed it was not this increasing restriction that helped to fix the form. Certain it is that poetry in the hands of Dryden, with all its frequent gorgeousness, grew less "rich and strange." Wordsworth said that there was not in the whole body of his works "a single image from nature." Johnson said that he had little power over the pathetic because he seemed "not much acquainted with the simple and elemental passions." His work suffered, too, from carelessness. Devoted to "correctness" as a principle, he often neglected to observe it in detail. He produced enormously, refusing to polish, and trusting to the excellence of what was good. Again, his work suffers from the too frequently local or temporary interest of his themes. The broad humanity of Shakespeare, the religious passion of Milton and Bunyan, are replaced by arguments upon matters of state, or satires aimed at passing fashions and insignificant men. But in spite of all this, his range remains very great, his vigor unequalled, and his mastery in the field of his own highest achievements unchallenged by the best of his disciples.

One other count to his credit must not be forgotten. In the course of his defence of certain theories of poetry, he produced a considerable body of critical prose, conspicuously *A Critic*, and the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668). By virtue of *Reformer of Prose.* this he is recognized as the leader and almost the founder of English criticism, and along with that as the founder of modern English prose. Modern English was already a thing two centuries old. But prose structure and style still needed regulation. We have only to turn to Milton's prose to see what a chaotic condition it was weltering in. Since the time of Malory it had departed more and more from native directness and simplicity, wandering into a hopeless tangle of classical involutions or degenerating into ragged uncouthness. In the hands of Bacon, Milton, and Browne, it possessed strength, or majesty, or splendor, beyond anything, indeed, that was to be

known again for nearly two centuries. But precision, lucidity, and regularity it did not possess. These were imparted to it by Dryden, with a little help it may be from Cowley before him, and doubtless a great deal of long unrecognized help, never felt by Dryden himself, from the humble works of Bunyan. The short, manageable sentence, the compact phrase, the grammatical coherence, which make English prose to-day the great practical "instrument of the average purpose," were largely Dryden's bequest. The very ideals to which he tried to make his poetry conform are easily seen to be in a measure prosaic ideals. He was a genuine poet; there is no thought of gainsaying that; but he was eminently the poet to be herald of that eighteenth century on the threshold of which he died, the "age of prose and reason."

CHAPTER XIII

EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—AGE OF THE CLASSICISTS

1700-1740

<i>Act of Settlement</i>	1701	SWIFT		<i>Arabian Nights</i> , tr.	
<i>Queen Anne</i>	1702-1714	STEELE		into French (Gal-	
<i>Battle of Blenheim</i>	1704	ADDISON		land), 1704	
<i>Treaty of Utrecht</i>	1713	POPE		LeSage's <i>Gil Blas</i> ,	
<i>George I</i>	1714-1727	DEFOE		1715-1735	
<i>Jacobite Rising</i>	1715			Prévost's <i>Manon</i>	
<i>South Sea Bubble</i>	1720			<i>Lescaut</i> , 1729-1733	
<i>Walpole, Prime Minister</i>				<i>Koran</i> , tr. into Eng-	
	1721-1742			lish (Sale), 1734	
<i>George II</i>	1727-1760			Gottsched	
<i>Second Jacobite Rising</i>	1745			Bach	
				Watteau	

The character of the period now under discussion has necessarily been sketched in part in following the work of Dryden, and not a great deal remains to say. The House of Stuart was still reigning, but Mary, the daughter of James, and her husband William of Orange, to whom she brought the crown, were Protestants, as was also Anne, the last of the Stuarts, who succeeded them; furthermore the Act of Settlement declared against any possible Catholic successor. The seventeenth century passed, and with it most of the political and religious turmoil that had made it a time of such rapid and radical changes. The Parliament had finally won in its long struggle with the Crown; a constitutional form of government was firmly established; the will of the Commons was to be henceforth virtually supreme. There was still war on the part of the Grand Alliance against France and Spain, and there were jealousy and suspicion at home as long as there was a Jacobite party strong enough to think of rallying to the standard of James's son, the "Pretender." Any



JOSEPH ADDISON
JOHN DRYDEN

ALEXANDER POPE
JONATHAN SWIFT

Tory, indeed, zealous for the Church and jealous of his landed interests, holding by the Crown, and disposed to cling to his theory of the divine right of kings regardless of Acts of Settlement, might be suspected by his opponents of being an actual Jacobite; while the Whigs, rapidly coming into power through commercial prosperity, and standing for the extension of all social and political privileges, were in turn suspected of being republicans. But in spite of these jealousies and of the Jacobite rising of 1715, England was gradually settling down to her long modern era of comparative peace.

In society, a spirit of obedience to law, and of subjection of the individual to the common good, began to be manifest in all directions. The immorality that had come in with the Restoration, as a violent reaction from Puritan restraint, and had spread from court and theatre until it infected the whole upper class of society, scarcely excepting the clergy, was still prevalent, but there were signs of a change. In 1698 the Reverend Jeremy Collier published his *Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage*, and Dryden himself was disposed to plead guilty. For long, however, the moralists and satirists had abundance of matter upon which to exercise their tongues and pens. Society in the narrower sense of the term was extremely frivolous. The cocked hats and periwigs, the lace ruffles and shoe-buckles, the stiff stays and high heels, powder and patches, fans and lap-dogs, that we associate with the reign of Queen Anne, were but the external indication of this. The young men of fashion oscillated between the drawing-rooms and the parks, the coffee houses and the play houses. The coffee and chocolate houses were a new institution which had followed upon the late introduction of the beverages they dispensed. They multiplied in London with great rapidity, and were frequented, according to their character, by politicians or writers, merchants or gallants, gamblers or thieves. Wit was in great demand to enliven the gatherings, and "wit" included much, from the eloquence of a Bolingbroke or the irony of a Swift to the ribald gossip

of the lowest rake. But this artificial life was not without good results in the friction of mind upon mind and the stimulus of healthy rivalry in a common cause. Individual license was more and more repressed, and beneath the external politeness and worship of "good breeding" lay a growing respect for decency and a desire to live according to the dictates of reason.

Literature followed. Rhetorical license was frowned upon; romantic enthusiasm was repressed. The wisdom of this or that political measure, the extension of trade, the regulation of pastimes, the observance of decorum at church and theatre, in a word, the practical business and manners of the age, became the engrossing topics of conversation and letters. Invention gave place to wit and criticism, imagination to common sense. All was formal, precise, smooth, classically correct. The prose essay became fashionable; satire accentuated its point and polish; poetry, accepting the French critic Boileau as dictator, grew steadily more conventional and trim.* In fact, having descended to the argumentative and didactic level, poetry was less distinct from prose in this age than in almost any other. The fact that Dryden preserved something of the spirit of an earlier time is the main reason for separating his work from the work of the period that immediately followed. In the main, the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries conformed to the same standards, the one merely completing what the other began. Both found their ideal in that classic elegance which obtained in Roman literature in the days of Augustus, and they are often called our Augustan age. When, therefore, at the turning of the century, the last of the great dramatists was laid in the tomb, and the last Stuart seated on the throne, we find no such facing about in society and literature as the Restoration brought with it forty years before. To the name of Dryden it is easy to link, in every order of time and affinity, the names of Swift,

* Evelyn's comment on *Hamlet* is extremely significant: "Now these old plays begin to disgust this refined century, since their majesties have been so long abroad."

Addison, and Pope. The two latter follow, indeed, at the distance of a full generation, yet the life of Swift, traced backward, overlaps that of Dryden by more than thirty, as the life of Defoe, who must be reserved for a yet later chapter, overlaps it by more than forty, years.

Great as was Dryden's satiric verse, and great as was Pope's that followed, the position of England's greatest satirist, all in all, is indisputably held by Dryden's cousin and more immediate successor, Jonathan Swift. Of English parentage, Swift was born in Ireland, in 1667, the year of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he received a degree with some difficulty, by "special grace." His father had died before his birth, and he found himself largely dependent on relatives and friends of the family. He was taken as a secretary, into the household of Sir William Temple, in England, and thus came into some contact with scholars and statesmen, even meeting King William himself. Finding little prospect of political preferment, he returned to Ireland and took religious orders. He came in time to be Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin, but he never attained to such place as he desired or such as his abilities entitled him to.

Swift wrote industriously, but chiefly as the occasion suggested, without definite literary aim; he rarely published over his own name, and, with the single exception of *Gulliver's Travels*, received no pay for his work. His writings, however, except when readers were too obtuse to see the ironical drift, went straight to their mark and exercised a tremendous influence. His first important publication was in 1704, when appeared the famous *Battle of the Books* and the much more justly famous *Tale of a Tub*. Both had been written six or seven years earlier, the former as a contribution to a very old controversy over the relative merits of "the ancients and moderns." Temple, in supporting the ancient writers, had stirred up a conflict that grew personal, and Swift, loving a good

fight, had taken his patron's part. His weapon, of course, was satire, and the whole skit, in which a mock-heroic war is waged between the books in St. James's library over "a small spot of ground lying upon one of the two tops of the hill Parnassus," is intensely amusing. But the subject was comparatively remote in interest. *A Tale of a Tub** was written in support of the Established Church against Romanism on the one side and Dissent on the other. It sets forth how three brothers, Peter, Martin, and Jack, were bequeathed by their dying father three new coats, which, the father said, would grow in proportion with their bodies, "lengthening and widening of themselves, so as to be always fit." Further explicit instructions for wearing them were given in the will. Peter is of course Rome, Martin is the Church of England, and Jack stands for the more radical, dissenting sects. The significance of the coats and of the changes they undergo through the pressure of fashion is not hard to divine.

"Now, the coats their father had left them were, it is true, of very good cloth, and, besides, so neatly sewn, you would swear they were all of a piece; but, at the same time, very plain, and with little or no ornament: and it happened, that before they were a month in town, great shoulder-knots came up; straight all the world was shoulder-knots; no approaching the ladies' *ruelles* without the *quota* of shoulder-knots. That fellow cries one, has no soul; where is his shoulder-knot? Our three brethren soon discovered their want by sad experience, meeting in their walks with forty mortifications and indignities. . . . In this unhappy case, they went immediately to consult their father's will, read it over and over, but not a word of the shoulder-knot; what should they do? What temper should they find? Obedience was absolutely necessary, and yet shoulder-knots appeared extremely requisite. After much thought, one of the brothers, who happened to be more book-learned than the other two, said, he had found an expedient. It is true, said he, there is nothing here in this will, *totidem verbis*, making mention of shoulder-knots: but I dare conjecture, we may find them *inclusive*, or *totidem syllabis*. This distinction was

* The title is an old phrase, meaning little more than "a foolish story," and may be found as the title of one of Ben Jonson's comedies. Swift, in his Introduction, gives it a somewhat more specific application.

immediately approved by all; and so they fell again to examine the will; but their evil star had so directed the matter, that the first syllable was not to be found in the whole writings. Upon which disappointment, he, who found the former evasion, took heart, and said, Brothers, there are yet hopes; for though we cannot find them *totidem verbis*, nor *totidem syllabis*, I dare engage we shall make them out, *tertio modo*, or *totidem literis*. This discovery was also highly commended, upon which they fell once more to the scrutiny, and picked out S, H, O, U, L, D, E, R; when the same planet, enemy to their repose, had wonderfully contrived, that a K was not to be found. Here was a weighty difficulty! but the distinguishing brother, for whom we shall hereafter find a name, now his hand was in, proved by a very good argument, that K was a modern, illegitimate letter, unknown to the learned ages, nor anywhere to be found in ancient manuscripts. . . . Upon this all farther difficulty vanished; shoulder-knots were made clearly out to be *jure paterno*: and our three gentlemen swaggered with as large and as flaunting ones as the best."

The scope of the tale, however, widens much beyond sectarian controversy, and strikes at abuses generally, both in and out of religion. In one respect it overshot its mark, bringing upon its author the suspicion of being hostile to all religion, and standing therefore in the way of his advancement in the Church.

The *Argument against Abolishing Christianity*, which he published in 1708, is another religious satire, and an excellent example of Swift's method. Where a less subtle irony would probably have brought forward some obviously ridiculous arguments *for* abolishing Christianity, Swift nimbly turns about and takes the side he really espoused, but takes it in mock humility. The coolness with which he assumes that Christianity is all but abolished already, yet holds that there are a few reasons for retaining it a little longer, among them the opportunity which it affords its enemies to display their wit and distinguish themselves, and his modest disclaimer that even he would not be understood as pleading for the real Christianity of old times, his sarcasm thus hitting hollow Christians as well as infidels, are among the most admirable things in the history of controversy. Swift's own religion, it may be said, was genuine, but

wholly practical, and not inconsistent with much that was coarse and even degrading.

During the early years of the century, the years of his greatest activity and influence, Swift was more or less in England.

In his political attitude he gradually shifted from the Whig to the Tory side, the tenets of the latter party
His Political Essays.

according more with his religious leanings; and when the Tories came into power in 1710, he found himself firmly established in the favor of the ministry. He used his influence on behalf of rising authors like Steele and Pope; he contributed political essays to the Tory organ, *The Examiner*, which were answered by Addison (with whom, however, he retained friendship) in the *Whig Examiner*, and he wrote a vigorous article, *The Conduct of the Allies* (1711), against the continental war under Marlborough's generalship which the Whigs were still supporting. But the downfall of the Tories at the death of Anne in 1714 put an end to this period, and he retired to Ireland, practically, as it turned out, for the rest of his life.

About this time occurred his marriage (if it ever really took place) to "Stella"—one Esther Johnson, a young woman whom

he met in the household of Temple, and for whom he had kept for some years a private *Journal*, which is now among the most interesting of his literary remains. He made himself very popular with the Irish by his *Drapier's Letters* (1724), in which he exposed

and defeated a corrupt political scheme to wring profit from the Irish poor. His *Modest Proposal* (1729) for eating children at the age of one year to prevent them from becoming a burden to their parents, was a grimly ironical paper likewise inspired by Ireland's wrongs. Of much wider significance was his *Gulliver's Travels*, published in 1726, a book, like Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, of enormous popularity. There must be few readers who have not in childhood followed Captain Lemuel on his marvellous voyages to the pygmy-land of Lilliput, the giant-land of Brobdingnag, the pedant-land of Laputa, and the land of the

Later Writings.
"Gulliver's Travels."

humane Houyhnhnms and the bestial Yahoos. But the unlikeness of this earthly allegory to Bunyan's spiritual visions is as great as could well be imagined. Under a thin disguise it portrays human society as Swift conceived it, in all its pettiness and baseness, its know-nothing science, its doing-nothing curiosity, its capering and creeping for courtly favor, its foolish Big-endian and Little-endian wars. It is the acme of Swiftian humor and satire, dressed in a garb that assured its reception by all classes of readers. After this Swift wrote little of the first importance. His declining years were passed in bitterness and the shadow of insanity. Stella died in 1728. His own death came, after prolonged agony, in 1745.

Swift's verse, consisting almost entirely of trifles, does not call for separate consideration. The works which have been

*General
Character.*

mentioned and in which his fame lives, are all in prose, and their general character may be gathered from the particular descriptions given. They are like the man. Sometimes they seem to be purely the product of whim, the work of one who loved a practical joke, as when Swift prophesied the death of Partridge, the almanac-maker, and then coolly maintained, in the face of denial, that the prophecy had been fulfilled. On the other hand, the underlying and intense seriousness of most of his work is not to be doubted. The chief difficulty in understanding his satire lies in the fact that it is a double-edged sword, cutting all ways. A defect that we could wish away is his frequent coarseness. The coarseness is less astonishing when we consider the tone of the age, yet there was serious perversion in a mind that could contemplate with satisfaction and sometimes apparent delight such repulsive images. This feature, however, we can escape; his ingrained pessimism we cannot. Swift's work has not the flush of health, because it moves in the shade; even the sunshine of its humor is without warmth. We may, or may not, call this a defect, according to our personal temper and need. The simple fact must be recorded, that Swift saw the ugliness and not the beauty

of humanity, and that he spent his energies in laying that ugliness bare. Yet over against this we must set the always massive substance of his thought, intellectually bracing beyond that of almost any other English writer, and not perhaps without a healthy moral reaction. To his credit we remember, too, that he did what he did in entire sincerity, and without a single bid for the literary fame he won. Imaginative as his work is, it is almost barren of ornament. Of the minor rhetorical figures there is hardly a trace. There is little enrichment by allusion, little borrowing of either images or ideas. All is original, direct, incisive, the quintessence of the wit that was the essence of the man.

In connection with Swift, mention has been made of a particular kind of literature that is invariably associated with the age of Queen Anne,—the periodical essay. *The Periodical Essay*. Periodicals, as newspapers, had been in existence for nearly a century; and the essay, as a literary form, was of course familiar. But the combination of the two was a novelty; and it speedily became, after its successful establishment, an important organ for the dissemination of the social ideas of the time.* The credit for the actual origin of the periodical essay is commonly assigned to Defoe, who established and carried on *The Review* from 1704 to 1713; but its final character and place in literature were unquestionably given it by Steele and Addison, two names that are as inseparably united in literary history as those of Wyatt and Surrey, or Beaumont and Fletcher.

Steele, who was two months the elder, was of Dublin birth, of mixed English and Irish parentage, and early orphaned. He was educated at the Charterhouse and at Oxford, which he left without taking a degree, and spent most of his life in

* "Periodicals were the fashion, most of them very short-lived. A periodical sheet was started to vent an opinion that, in the present day, would be expressed in a letter, or a series of letters, to a daily newspaper; and expired either when the author had exhausted the idea, or when the public had received enough and refused to purchase more."—Wm. Minto.

London. He was ten years in the army, as cadet, ensign, and captain, but probably saw no active service; his pen had more to do with his promotions than his sword. His position and his disposition contributed to make him what he was, a gay man about town, a frequenter of the coffee houses, with a little of the nature of the profligate and the drunkard and a great deal of the spendthrift, dependent on his commissions and pensions and his wife's bounty, paying his debts by the easy method of contracting others, now in high favor and now in disgrace, but always good natured, and liked by even his political enemies.

It seems a little odd to record, as the first book of such a man, a religious essay, *The Christian Hero* (1701). More in keeping were three comedies that followed, *The Funeral* (1701), *The Lying Lover* (1703), and *The Tender Husband* (1705), which, light as they are, yet played a part in raising the morals of the stage and substituting the comedy of sentiment for that of brutal licentiousness. His more significant work, the essays, began when in 1709 he established *The Tatler*, a Whig penny tri-weekly, to which both Swift and Addison contributed. For himself, as editor and major contributor, he assumed the name of Isaac Bickerstaff, which Swift had used and made popular in the Partridge almanac episode. The rise of the Tories in 1711 put an end to the *Tatler*, very fortunately for literature, for the immortal *Spectator* rose in its stead. This was the joint enterprise of Steele and Addison. It was published daily for nearly two years (March 1711 to December 1712, revived 1714), each number consisting of a single sheet and containing a single sketch or essay. Differing from its forerunners in being non-political, choosing its topics from a wide variety of interests, serving social life and literature at the same time, it rose at once to popularity and that position of eminence which it has ever since held among the great number of its contemporaries and successors. It was Steele who sketched the *Spectator* Club in No. 2; and of the total number of 555 papers he contributed 236. *The Guardian*,

which was mainly Steele's enterprise, followed in 1713. Then, the next year, the Whigs returned to power with the Hanoverian succession, and Steele re-entered political life as Swift went out of it. He was even knighted and elected a member of Parliament. But though he still wrote, among other things his fourth and best comedy, *The Conscious Lovers* (1722), his most valuable literary service was at an end. He died at his wife's estate in Wales, aged fifty-seven.

The events of the quiet and scholarly Addison's life may be set down yet more briefly. The son of a divine with a living in

Wiltshire, he was himself intended for the Church; but after his education, obtained at the same time as Steele's, at the Charterhouse and Oxford, court friends, with whom he became acquainted through

Joseph
Addison,
1672-1719.

Dryden and Congreve, secured him a travelling pension that he might fit himself for diplomacy. He spent four years on the continent, studying the languages, observing, and writing; and on his return became a member of the famous Whig "Kit-Cat Club" (see *Spectator*, No. 9). He was commissioned to write a poem on the great victory of the Allies at Blenheim, and produced *The Campaign* (1704), containing the celebrated couplets on Marlborough, who

"Inspir'd repuls'd battalions to engage,
And taught the doubtful battle where to rage."

It may almost be said of the simile which immediately follows these lines, the simile of the calm angel who "Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm," that it made Addison's contemporary fame; but of his poetic product, for the most part mediocre, posterity has cared more for several devotional hymns, especially the one beginning, "The spacious firmament on high."

Official positions succeeded, and Addison lived thenceforth the not very eventful life of a public servant who was virtually a pensioned man of letters. From 1708 onward he sat in Parliament; but he was a silent member, preferring to exercise his talent for speech in a conversational way among the disciples whom he

gathered about him at Button's coffee house, much as Dryden had done before at Will's. . He had most literary leisure and incentive while the Whigs were out of power, from 1710 to 1714. It was then that he joined Steele, to whose *Tatler* he had already been a contributor, in issuing the *Spectator*. His contributions to the latter numbered somewhat more than Steele's; of the famous Sir Roger de Coverley papers in particular he wrote considerably the larger number. He also contributed to the later *Guardian* and the revived *Spectator*; and he composed a tragedy, *Cato*, which was very successfully acted in 1713. Several years later he married the Countess of Warwick and retired on a pension. He died in 1719, at the age of forty-seven, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. As a man, he seems to have been modest, kind-hearted, upright, and forbearing; not so whole-souled and generous as his friend Steele, but without most of Steele's many shortcomings; less lovable, doubtless, but distinctly more admirable.

The Spectator, we have said, was a great miscellany. There were only such restrictions as the editors chose to place upon themselves, as, for instance, in the matter of political "The *Spectator*." opinions, and of course the restrictions of space and timeliness. The purpose of entertainment was naturally best served by varying the topic from day to day, giving now a character sketch, now a bit of criticism, now a pleasant fable, and now a sugared sermon for the week's end. Sometimes a topic was resumed in a later number, and by reassembling the numbers we may get several fairly connected series, such as the papers upon *Paradise Lost*, or the Roger de Coverley sketches. Very trivial many of the subjects seem—lightness, indeed, was specifically aimed at—and we hear a great deal of "sparks" and "toasts" and "clubs" and fashionable "routs." But beneath the levity there was a serious purpose, which is best stated by the *Spectator* himself:—

"Having thus taken my resolutions, to march on boldly in the cause of virtue and good sense, and to annoy their adversaries in what-

ever degree or rank of men they may be found, I shall be deaf for the future to all the remonstrances that shall be made to me on this account. If Punch grows extravagant, I shall reprimand him very freely; if the stage becomes a nursery of folly and impertinence, I shall not be afraid to animadvert upon it. In short, if I meet with anything in city, court, or country, that shocks modesty or good manners, I shall use my utmost endeavors to make an example of it. I must however intreat every particular person who does me the honor to be a reader of this paper, never to think himself, or any one of his friends or enemies, aimed at in what is said: for I promise him never to draw a faulty character which does not fit at least a thousand people: or to publish a single paper that is not written in the spirit of benevolence, and with a love to mankind."—*No. 34.*

In conformity with this purpose we may expect to find again and again such sentiments as, "I love to see a man zealous in a good matter, and especially when his zeal shows itself for advancing morality, and promoting the happiness of mankind," or "A man who uses his best endeavors to live according to the dictates of virtue and right reason, has two perpetual sources of cheerfulness." These were the genuine and consistent principles of Addison, in whose papers they are found. Of this practical morality, of this wholesome respect for reasonable social order and the conventions that support it, a spirit carrying with it a certain distrust of anything like individual freedom and enthusiasm, perhaps no better illustration could be cited than the "Fable of Menippus" (*No. 391*), in which, after satirizing the prayers which men, in the variety of their wishes, offer to Heaven, the moralist concludes with this defence of the ritual of the Established Church: "Among other reasons for set forms of prayer, I have often thought it a very good one, that by this means the folly and extravagance of men's desires may be kept within due bounds, and not break out in absurd and ridiculous petitions on so great and solemn an occasion." The essays actually helped to make decorous living fashionable, proving an invaluable antidote for the moral laxity and frivolity which had been transmitted from the preceding generation.

It is to be noted, too, that the essays unconsciously preserved for posterity a faithful and vivid picture of their age. What Pepys did, though more narrowly, in his day, and Boswell later in his, what the comic dramatists, with some false emphasis, were doing, and what the novelists are doing at the present time, Addison and his group did for the society of Queen Anne. We think we know the manners and ideals of the day almost as if we had been born to them. This is doubtless the great service of the *Spectator* essays to readers—it is mainly what they are read for. But literature owes them still other debts. In the first place, they perfected the development of that species of literary delineation known as the "Character," which, as it came to be less of a set portrait, was to play immediately into the hands of the novelists. And, in the second place, they left the legacy of a finished and tractable style. For their style is admirably in keeping with their spirit—light, graceful, correct, refined. Humor is always present to lighten the sermon or take the sting from the satire. There is no boisterous merriment, as there is no heat of anger. The bounds of decorum are carefully observed. Now and then may come a passage of heightened color or richer tone, as, for example, in "The Vision of Mirza," but there is nothing to be compared with the soaring eloquence of Milton or the oppressive splendor of Browne. It is simply the regulated prose of Dryden with the added touch of Augustan elegance that makes the style of our classic age. This polished instrument two centuries have adapted to their varying needs.

The respective parts of Steele and Addison in this work can be determined with sufficient accuracy. There were other contributors of whom we have made no mention, the unfortunate Budgell, for instance, Addison's cousin, and the youthful Pope; but their share may be ignored. Addison and Steele were the mind and soul of the enterprise, and they worked in such harmony and kept so close to a standard which sought to level distinctions, that they might at first glance seem indistinguishable. Yet the fundamental difference of their natures is revealed.

What Steele originated and stimulated, Addison developed and perfected. Steele approached his work with the freshness of a first impulse, Addison with the sobriety of second thoughts. Steele was too much absorbed in the activities and pleasures of life to be an ideal spectator or a "correct" writer. We might call him the humanist, in the natural sense of the word. Addison was rather the scholar and the artist. We may like the effusiveness of Steele, his tenderness toward women, his freedom from cynicism, even the faults of his unguarded style. But we must concede to Addison the larger share of credit both on moral and literary grounds. Addison was the consistent censor of manners and morals; it was Addison who enriched his lucubrations with the stores of learning; to him belongs in all its essential features that really great creation, Sir Roger; and his was the perfection of that "middle" style, "familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious," which Doctor Johnson, in his *Lives of the Poets*, so emphatically commended.

It would scarcely have been surprising had the time brought forth no important poetry. As a matter of fact there was a brief

Prior, Gay, Young.	interregnum after the death of Dryden, marked almost solely by the graceful "society verse" of Matthew Prior (1664-1721), and Addison's <i>Campaign</i>, which poem, however, Addison failed to follow up worthily. A little later, John Gay (1685-1732) appeared with his burlesque pastoral, <i>The Shepherd's Week</i> (1713), and his clever town-poem, <i>Trivia</i> (1716), to be followed by his once famous <i>Fables</i> (1727) and <i>Beggar's Opera</i> (1728). In the last named occurs the well-known song,
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"How happy could I be with either,
 Were t'other dear Charmer away!
 But while you thus tease me together,
 To neither a word will I say."

At the same time, Edward Young (1683-1765), a poet of very different type, was wooing fame from the obscurity of an Oxford fellowship with gloomy religious heroics,—tragedies, satires, and

odes,—to be rewarded at last when he produced his ponderous and equally gloomy but majestic and harmonious blank verse poem, *Night Thoughts* (1742–1744), beginning with the memorable line,

“Tir’d Nature’s sweet restorer, balmy sleep!”

Young, however, on the one hand so harks back to Milton, and on the other (with a junior contemporary, James Thomson) so looks forward to the romanticism of a later generation, within hailing distance of which his years almost brought him, that he seems scarcely to have been a poet of his own classical age.

Yet the age was not to be without its poet, and even when the *Spectator* was taking London by storm, young Alexander

Alexander Pope,
1688–1744. Pope, for whom the age is sometimes named, was rapidly making his way into the place vacated by Dryden. Personally Pope was a most unpromising

contestant for the laurels of Apollo. A fine eye and a melodious voice were all that he had to offset a body that was sickly, dwarfish, and deformed; he could scarcely dress and undress himself. Born in London, the son of a Roman Catholic linen-draper, he was brought up some miles distant, on the borders of Windsor Forest. His education was irregular—for an English University career was not open to Catholics—but the development of his literary talent was early and rapid. He was introduced to town life by the dramatist Wycherley, came to know Addison and his circle, and later, as a member of the Scriblerus Club, Swift, Gay, and others. But owing to his frail constitution, his relations with these men were more literary than social. Debarred from politics and patronage, he kept close to his country life, and in 1718, enriched by his translation of Homer, leased a house at Twickenham on the banks of the Thames. There, in accordance with the prevalent passion for landscape gardening, he laid out his little five acres into artificial mounts and shaven greens, grotto, orangery, grove, and even “wilderness.” The grotto—a tunnel beneath a roadway—was famous for its ornaments of shells and natural curiosities. This

was Pope's home to his death, his shelter from the literary storms which his satirical and too often malicious pen constantly brought upon him. For of his personal character not much can be said to his credit. The open vices of Steele seem pardonable by the side of the petty spitefulness of Pope. Perhaps allowance may be made on the ground that his mental and moral nature was warped by his physical ills.

His first publication consisted of four *Pastorals* (1709), corresponding to the four seasons. They were composed, he said, at the age of sixteen. They are an imitation of Virgil's *Eclogues*, written in very correct heroic couplets, and full of classical machinery; nymphs and swains pipe and dance on the shores of the Thames; a milk-white bull is sacrificed to Phœbus; the showers descend from the Pleiads; sultry Sirius burns the thirsty plains. In short they are an excellent illustration of the fact that so-called pastoral poetry, which, to be true to its name, should be the most simple and natural of verse, had come to be well-nigh the most artificial. Another of his early poems, *Windsor Forest* (published in 1713, but written much earlier), which has sometimes been praised for containing real touches of nature, shows the same admixture of conventionalism; the "bright-ey'd perch" have "fins of Tyrian dye," and "blushing Flora paints th' enamell'd ground." The *Essay on Criticism* (1711) is a didactic poem, likewise in heroics, full of rules and precepts for poetry, such as

"Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside,"

many of which have been quoted thousands of times. This poem drew the attention and won the favorable opinion of Addison. Shortly after this he published *The Rape of the Lock* (1712, extended 1714). This was a brilliant mock heroic poem, written to turn to a laugh, and so allay, a quarrel that had arisen between two families because a young lord had sportively cut off a lock of a young lady's hair. That it quite effected this object we cannot be certain; but through its satiric portrayal of the

fashionable life of the day it achieved a wide popular and critical success, and it remains one of the poet's very best works.

Then Pope, who had long been trying his hand at all sorts of translations, imitations, and paraphrases, was urged by Swift and others to translate Homer. A special incentive was found in liberal advance subscriptions, for the work was designed to be published in a number of sumptuous volumes. He spent seven years on the *Iliad*, and the six volumes of that work appeared from 1715 to 1720. In five years more, the *Odyssey* was completed, with the help of two other translators. Apart from the literary value of this work, which will be discussed below, it is significant as marking a new era in the history of English letters, the era of public instead of private patronage. Henceforth, a writer of talent might depend upon his readers for remuneration, and not upon a pension or the gift of some wealthy sponsor who, out of a real admiration for literature, or merely to gratify his personal pride, chose to pose as a patron of it. Pope received for his Homer nearly £10,000. His gibes at the half-starved scribblers of Grub Street came with a very ill grace from a man whom the public treated so handsomely.

Free, at length, for more purely original work, he turned again to the field of satiric and didactic verse which he had pre-empted a dozen years before. The first fruit of his new endeavors was *The Dunciad* (1728). Since Dryden's great success, it had been quite the fashion to satirize literary dulness, and Swift's Scriblerus Club had been formed with the express purpose of carrying on burlesque war against the hacks and poetasters. Swift had proposed to Pope that he should employ his skill in a general satire, and the final outcome was the *Dunciad*. But the *Dunciad* is not general. Pope selected his objects with little attempt at concealment and struck straight and hard. Not only the incompetent scribblers and bardlings, but every man against whom he had a real or fancied grievance—publishers with whom he had quarrelled, dramatists who had borrowed his lines without credit—came in for a touch of his venomous

spite or scathing scorn. The poem might live by its virulence alone if it had no less dubious merits. The principal object of his attack was Colley Cibber a dramatist and actor of the Theatre Royal, and later Poet Laureate, whom the goddess of Dulness is made to appoint Poet Laureate of her realm:—

“She ceased. Then swells the chapel-royal throat;
 ‘God save King Cibber!’ mounts in every note.
 Familiar White’s ‘God save King Colley!’ cries;
 ‘God save King Colley!’ Drury-lane replies.
 To Needham’s quick the voice triumphal rode
 But pious Needham dropp’d the name of God;
 Back to the Devil the last echoes roll,
 And ‘Coll!’ each butcher roars at Hockley-hole.
 So when Jove’s block descended from on high
 (As sings thy great forefather Ogilby)
 Loud thunder to its bottom shook the bog,
 And the hoarse nation croak’d ‘God save King Log!’ ”

After this, Pope was for some time kept busy defending himself and altering the poem to suit his purpose. Then, through practically the remainder of his life, he was engaged upon a succession of *Epistles*, *Moral Essays*, and *Satires*. The most ambitious was the *Essay on Man* (1732–1734), long regarded as a great philosophical poem, and certainly a triumphant example of Pope’s peculiar powers. It versified many of the philosophical fragments of Bolingbroke, aiming to set forth the principles of Deism, a kind of natural religion then current, and one of the approaches to that infidelity which Swift had satirized in his *Argument against Abolishing Christianity*. As philosophy, however, it is not remarkable; and there are those to-day who will scarcely admit it under their definition of poetry. But it spread Pope’s fame to many nations, being translated even into such languages as Portuguese and Polish, where English poetry has seldom gone. Of his other poems of this period, the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* (1735) contains the famous “character of Atticus,” which had been written many years before, and in which Pope had attempted to satisfy a

grudge he bore against Addison, denouncing him as one who knew well how to

“Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer.”

In all these busy years—for though Pope did not live to a great age he began his work early—he had made himself the final master of the heroic couplet in its changed form, the *Estimate of his Work.* form which Waller began to use nearly a hundred years before and which grew to power in the hands of Dryden. Pope aimed from the first at a “correctness” that should exceed anything yet reached in English poetry, and, in accordance with his own ideals, he attained it. He made the couplet more precise than ever, more conformable to fixed laws, even wholly discarding in his later work both triplets and Alexandrines. He took this single instrument, pointed and polished it like a rapier, and went forth with the air of a conqueror. And so admirably was the instrument suited, not only to his own purpose, but to the temper of the age, that he fixed for his century a poetic fashion which nothing short of a revolution in ideals could avail to change.

Apart from this mastery of form, Pope’s fame rests almost equally on the two main divisions of his work, the translation of Homer, and the satiric-didactic pieces. His success in the former was of a peculiar kind. He knew little Greek and was compelled to work through other translations. Moreover, his neat little couplet was as far removed from the ample sweep of Homer’s lines as can well be imagined. The fact is, he did not succeed in translating Homer, as every scholar since Bentley has clearly discerned. The directness and simplicity of the original are lost. For nature there is convention, for eloquence there is rhetoric, for passion there is point. The bright moon is made into the “refulgent lamp of night,” lambs are a “fleecey care,” flying arrows are “feather’d fates,” the temple of Pallas is the “high Palladian dome.” When Hecuba goes “down to her fragrant chamber,” Pope writes:—

"The Phrygian queen to her rich wardrobe went,
Where treasur'd odors breath'd a costly scent."

Homer's Priam asks to "take his fill of sweet sleep." Pope's Priam prays:—

"Permit me now, belov'd of Jove, to steep
My careful temples in the dew of sleep."

Homer's Hector is fated "to glut fleet-footed dogs in the dwelling of a violent man." Pope's Hector stands

"Doom'd from the hour his luckless life begun,
To dogs, to vultures, and to Peleus' son!"

Yet out of the framework and story which Homer provided, Pope produced a great poem, perhaps the greatest single poem of his century. His own and succeeding generations read it with intense delight, not asking themselves whether it faithfully reproduced Homer, but satisfied to feel that it was spirited in action and characters, noble in sentiment, and faultless in form. It comes, indeed, about to this—that for English readers there are two Homers instead of one; and if we will take the second for what it is, and not complain because it is not the first, we shall be able to perceive its really original merits. As thorough a romanticist as Ruskin in the nineteenth century could acknowledge his great debt to this eighteenth century classic.

The virtue of Pope's other poems lies not so much in their significance as wholes, as in the perfection of a hundred detachable parts. The *Rape of the Lock* is an admirable single poem, almost the only one that can boast complete, artistic unity, and it has some admirable long passages, like the description of Belinda's toilet at the end of the first canto, or the game of Ombre in the third. But even in this, the parts are better than the whole; while in almost all his other poems the things we remember are the scores of lines and couplets, each of which has caught up some fact of life, or precept of morality, and expressed it so aptly and smoothly that it is as it were minted into a coin current for all time:—

"To err is human, to forgive divine."

"Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is man."

"Honor and shame from no condition rise:
Act well your part; there all the honor lies."

Only Shakespeare, of English poets, is more quotable or more often quoted, than Pope. This is not originality, but it is the next best thing—this ability to clarify and adorn the ideas of more original minds and so make them common property. And this was Pope's special gift, so perfect in its kind that he may well contest with his friend and mentor, the far more original Swift, the position of leading spirit of the age.

Now with the work of these men before us, especially the prose of Addison and the poetry of Pope, we are in a position to understand what is meant by the "Classicism" of the age. It does not mean that there was genuine enthusiasm for classical scholarship; that belonged rather to the age of the Renaissance. But there was great admiration for the particular ideals of Roman literature in the time of Augustus—for rhetorical polish and refinement. The *Epistles* and *Satires* of Horace were especially regarded as models. French influence also was strong, for men like La Fontaine, Boileau, and the dramatists, had already fixed a similar character upon French literature. The pleasure which was taken in making prose correct and orderly was extended to poetry, and every species of lawlessness was decried. Homer, Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton had all to be remodelled to suit the changed taste. In short, artificiality, in literature as in social life, was the keynote. There was much talk of nature. "True wit is nature to advantage dress'd" was one of Pope's maxims. But in the first place, this "nature" meant specifically the manners of life as they were found; and then the dressing to advantage left little even in those that could be called natural. Imagination was dead, and a nimble fancy,

a sharpened logic, and a cunning art, took its place. The depths of human emotion were left unsounded, the glories and mysteries of outdoor nature unexplored. Poets were content to find their themes in the trivial concerns of a frivolous society or the commonplace of a self-satisfied philosophy. In the *Rape of the Lock*, for instance, cards are called, and—

“Behold, four Kings in majesty revered,
With hoary whiskers and a forky beard.”

Coffee is served, and—

“From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,
While China’s earth receives the smoking tide.”

The lock is cut from the fair one’s head, and—

“What Time would spare, from steel receives its date,
And monuments, like men, submit to fate!
Steel could the labor of the gods destroy,
And strike to dust th’ imperial towers of Troy;
Steel could the works of mortal pride confound,
And hew triumphal arches to the ground.
What wonder, then, fair nymph! thy hairs should feel
The conquering force of unresisted steel?”

To such uses had the heroics of Chaucer and Marlowe come. The gulf that separates not only these verses from the lightest of Shakespeare’s or Milton’s, but equally the highest reaches of their author from the sublime imaginings of the men who had gone before, cannot be measured. Yet we may spare ridicule; indeed ridicule for the matter no sooner threatens to rise than admiration for the unsurpassed art of the manner thrusts it back. Pity, moreover, were out of place. Each age has its work to perform; and, thanks to Swift, Addison, Pope, and their fellows the Classical Age of English literature need yield to no other in the effectiveness with which it performed its special task.

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SAMUEL RICHARDSON
DANIEL DEFOE

LAWRENCE STERNE
HENRY FIELDING

CHAPTER XIV

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—RISE OF THE NOVEL

1720-1770

DEFOE RICHARDSON FIELDING SMOLLETT STERNE

To the eighteenth century belongs the development of a virtually new species of literature which has since grown to be one of the strongest competitors of poetry and the drama. It is what we know to-day as the Novel, employing a term which did not come into very general English use until some time after the thing itself.* It is to be carefully distinguished from the older Romance. The latter term was long applied to any narrative of adventure or love, usually in verse, and commonly a translation from one of the Romance languages; and the element of adventure remains to this day one of the conspicuous features of the prose romance. "The Novel," wrote Clara Reeve in her *Progress of Romance* (1785), "is a picture of real life and manners, and of the time in which it is written. The Romance, in lofty and elevated language, describes what never happened nor is likely to happen." Of course the kinds are bound to overlap, and a sort of cross between the two may be seen in the Spanish picaresque or rogue stories, which are frequently full of wild adventures against a background of the sheerest realism. But something more is required of the novel. The picaresque tale itself lacks the very essential elements of plot, and of character as revealed in and developed by plot. It

*In Elizabethan times the word was applied to short realistic tales, commonly translated from the Italian (Italian, *novella*). The eighteenth century novelists, Richardson, Fielding, etc., preferred to call their novels "Histories."

is the addition of these elements and their combination into a coherent and artistic narrative of seemingly real life that constitute the true novel, and this was scarcely to be found until the century of which we now write.

The general history of prose fiction, extending from the tales in ancient Greek and Roman literature through the abundant Italian and Spanish romances of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries down to the almost simultaneous rise, in Germany, France, and England, of the novel proper, cannot be traced here. Confining ourselves to English literature, we may note that only some half dozen works have thus far been mentioned which may properly come under the general name of prose fiction. The earliest of them belong to the time of Caxton and Malory, the others to the Elizabethan age. Malory's great work, we have seen, is specifically a romance, but a romance on so large a scale, with such a heroic, legendary, and even superhuman background, that it may with almost equal propriety be called a prose epic. The Elizabethan romances are different. Sidney's *Arcadia* and Lodge's *Rosalynde* are both pastoral in character. Lyly's *Euphues* is harder to define; a handbook of social morals and manners, with a thin plot, it may be said to approach the character of a novel, though still far from corresponding exactly to our modern idea of this form. The seventeenth century did not add much beyond some very artificial romances of chivalry and some wretched "rogue" stories. Toward the end, indeed, appeared Mrs. Behn's popular *Oroonoko* and *The Fair Jilt* (1688), which may by courtesy be named novels, if perchance they find any readers to-day to name them at all. And there was one seventeenth century book, already discussed in this history, though not under the name of a romance, which must not be overlooked. In intent, of course, *The Pilgrim's Progress* is an entirely earnest religious allegory; yet many of its thousands of readers read it with little thought that it is anything but an

entertaining story. Half dramatic, half narrative in method,* it presents both characters and something of a plot, and has thus two of the vital elements named above.

At the beginning, however, of the eighteenth century, came, from a more conscious literary source, a most direct contribution. This is the character-sketch as it culminated in the hands of the essayists. The "Character" was a species of literary portrait much affected in the seventeenth century. It is the description of a general type only,† not unlike one of Jonson's types of "Humours." The essayists, especially Addison and Steele, first gave such "Characters" personal names, and breathed into them the breath of individual life, with the result best seen in the realistic portraits of the Spectator Club. In achieving lifelikeness, indeed, their success was greater than that of Bunyan, who had approached the same thing from another point of view. In *The Pilgrim's Progress* the illusion of reality is not quite complete. Even the reader who scarcely suspects allegory, feels this. The journey which Christian makes, by however realistic quagmires and valleys and hills, is yet a dream-journey to some mystic goal; and Christian and his companions are in so far removed from the actual world. Not such is Sir Roger de Coverley. He is a man of our own kind; his flesh and blood are fed with English beef and ale; we could take him familiarly by the hand and talk with him about his gray pad and his poultry and his stop-hounds. In short, he is all ready to step into a perfected

* "Honest John," says Benjamin Franklin in his *Autobiography*, "was the first that I know of who mixed narrative and dialogue." Of course Bunyan was not the first—the method is common to nearly all the romances mentioned above—but his example at this time no doubt counted for more than the others. See also what was said (p. 159) about Bunyan's *Life and Death of Mr. Badman*.

† Sir Thomas Overbury, for instance, hit off the country gentleman as one whose "travel is seldom farther than the next market town, and his inquisition is about the price of corn: when he travelleth, he will go ten mile out of the way to a cousin's house of his to save charges; and rewards the servants by taking them by the hand when he departs." So of the proud man: "He neversalutes first." Of the covetous man: "He never spends candle but at Christmas (when he has them for New Year's gifts) in hope that his servants will break glasses for want of a light, which they double pay for in their wages."

novel, as he seems to have stepped out of one. Just what, then, was needed to create that novel, is now plain. Had Bunyan foregone allegory and a visionary framework, or had Addison introduced a connected narrative of plot, the novel would have been born. As it was, its actual birth was delayed another generation. Meanwhile, the author of *Gulliver's Travels* and the author of *Robinson Crusoe* were also anticipating the event. Of Swift we have spoken; Defoe must have place here.

The life of Defoe is veiled in obscurity. We know that he was the son of a butcher, and, for a while, himself a tradesman, and that he afterward served the army, journalism, and politics in turn. He was several times prosecuted for libel and treason. A satirical pamphlet against the high-churchmen got him into prison, while a political ballad made him at the same time a popular hero. Intrigue and dissembling seemed part of his nature; he even conducted a professedly Tory journal in the secret pay of the Whig government. Through all his vicissitudes he remained essentially a man of the common people, and possibly cherished at heart the rough morality and piety which they are wont to practice and which he could preach so effectively at need. He died, apparently, a homeless wanderer.

By the sheer industry of his restless pen, plied, to all seeming, without joy or ambition, Defoe produced above two hundred and fifty works. They fall easily into two classes—a miscellaneous class of practical, satirical, and political pieces, and works of fiction. The first of these extends from an *Essay on Projects* in 1698 and a hoaxing pamphlet on *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* in 1702 through a long succession of ephemeral tracts. During his imprisonment he started *The Review* (1704), which has already been mentioned as a forerunner of the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, and which he continued to issue for nearly ten years. The service of these writings was to journalism rather than to literature proper.

*Daniel
Defoe,
1659-1731.*

It is very different with the works of fiction. The most important of them, all written when Defoe was nearly or quite sixty years of age, are, to name them in order, *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), *Captain Singleton* (1720), *Moll Flanders*, *Journal of the Plague Year*, *Colonel Jack* (1722), *Roxana* (1724). It may seem strange to class a work entitled *Journal of the Plague Year* as fiction; it will seem still more strange to one who reads, without enlightenment, that wonderful history. Details are set down with all the statistical minuteness of facts; descriptions are as vivid as an eye-witness could make them; there is little attempt at method, and positively no attempt at color or the adornments of fine writing. It never enters the reader's mind that an effect is sought; the sole object seems to be to convey the bare truth of history, to report things as they were. Yet Defoe was scarcely six years old when the plague swept London. Something his book may owe to memory, and much, of course, to records and the relations of others, but the *Journal*, "written by a citizen who continued all the while in London," and "never made public before," is nevertheless not the truthful history it appears. Defoe's especial gift was, as has well been said, to "lie like truth," and the *Journal* is essentially a work of realistic fiction. Such more obviously, are the other works named. They are mostly rogue stories of the Spanish picaresque type, setting forth circumstantial biographies of imaginary heroes in the wild or low life that Defoe knew so well. Captain Singleton is a pirate of the African coast; Moll Flanders is a Newgate thief and outcast who is transported to Virginia; Colonel Jack is a pick-pocket. The method was one which Defoe employed throughout his journalistic career. Upon the death or sudden notoriety of any person of mark, whether it were Peter the Great of Russia or Jonathan Wild the highwayman, he was ready with a "Life" or "Memoir" which the public would be eager to read, and in which the semblance of truth was unblushingly made to serve for the truth itself. It was quite as easy to furnish out an imaginary character with a similarly interesting life and adven-

tures. Ungarnished verisimilitude was invariably the keynote. An example may be taken at random from almost any page:—

“Nothing could be more perplexing than this money was to me all that night. I carried it in my hand a good while, for it was in gold, all but 14s.; and that is to say, it was in four guineas, and that 14s. was more difficult to carry than the four guineas. At last I sat down and pulled off one of my shoes, and put the four guineas into that; but after I had gone a while, my shoe hurt me so I could not go, so I was fain to sit down again and take it out of my shoe, and carry it in my hand. Then I found a dirty linen rag in the street, and I took that up and wrapped it all together, and carried it in that a good way. I have often since heard people say, when they have been talking of money that they could not get in, ‘I wish I had it in a foul clout;’ in truth, I had mine in a foul clout; for it was foul, according to the letter of that saying, but it served me till I came to a convenient place, and then I sat down and washed the clout in the kennel, and so then put my money in again.”—*Colonel Jack*.

It was in pursuit of the same method that *Robinson Crusoe*, the first and for the present generation almost the only one of Defoe's works of fiction, came into being. Alexander Selkirk, a Scotch sailor, had spent four years in solitary self-exile on the island of Juan Fernandez. He returned to London, and his story got abroad. Then Defoe put forth the fascinating experiences of one Robinson Crusoe, a York mariner, dated the narrative before Selkirk's adventure, and declared that he believed it to be all true. The prevarication is of little consequence now. Schoolboy and critic alike know it to be as good as true, and the art that makes it so is so much the greater. The book is a universal classic. It has been praised sometimes for its pious teaching. This feature, indeed, is characteristic of Defoe; his *Colonel Jack* is never depicted as naturally evil; and *Moll Flanders* dies repentant. But a more real instructive value is probably found in the practical side of Crusoe's character, in his persistent energy and boundless resourcefulness, through which he exemplifies in his own life much of the history of human progress from uncouth savagery to the refinements of civilization. Best of all, however, is that for which the book is oftenest read—the seemingly artless

story itself, the fascinating tale of actual life under unusual yet entirely natural circumstances. The longevity of its fame is beyond conjecture.

Whether or not this was the first deliberate and full-grown English novel is a matter of definition. There are those who would call *Robinson Crusoe* a novel of incident, though not a novel of character. In the delineation of character Defoe had little skill. Incidents on the other hand he employed in abundance, and very effectively. But they are loosely strung together; as in the picaresque tale, the only connection between the separate adventures is that a single hero experiences them. In other words, there is virtually no plot; and if plot and character are essential to the novel, as in a strict definition they certainly are, Defoe's stories cannot be called novels. His one great contribution, we have seen, was his painstaking realistic method—the thing which makes it difficult to call his works by the old name of romance. It must not be understood that realism is essential to all novels; certainly such minutely circumstantial realism as Defoe's is not. But it afforded the most perfect basis for the construction of plots and the portrayal of characters which should be intimately correlated as in life; and when all these met, the precise thing we now call a novel was unquestionably evolved. Such a meeting is to be found in the first novel of Samuel Richardson.

Richardson followed Defoe by thirty years, and like him was past fifty when he began to write fiction. Unlike Defoe, however, he had written nothing before except love-letters which as a Derbyshire country boy he had composed for the girls of his neighborhood. He was simply a successful London printer and stationer, who had attained to plumpness, fussiness, and a fondness for tea, when a publisher asked him to prepare a volume of *Familiar Letters* which might serve as a kind of model letter-writer for the illiterate. Richardson did this and more besides; he conceived the idea of weaving into a series of similar letters a story, at

Samuel
Richardson,
1689-1761.

the same time pointing a moral for the frivolous or thoughtless serving maids who would be likely to read such a book. The result was the somewhat crude novel, *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* (1740). The heroine is a humble girl who by the exercise of steadfast virtue finally accomplishes marriage with her master and persecutor. The success of the novel was so marked, extending outside of England to the continent, that it was followed by a better and much more elaborate book, in seven volumes, *Clarissa, or the History of a Young Lady* (1748). The heroine of this, Clarissa Harlowe, moves, from the outset, on the middle-class social level to which Pamela Andrews attains in the end. She suffers a very similar persecution at the hands of the artful villain Lovelace, only the situations are more complicated, the characters more complex, and the end tragic. Richardson's third and last novel, *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753), touched upon aristocratic life, and attempted to set forth the author's idea of a perfect gentleman.

All these novels are written in the form of letters passing between the characters; if the author comes forward with explanations or comments, it is only in foot-notes. All of them have a fairly well defined plot—a conclusion which is clearly foreseen by the writer and patiently and consistently worked up to. All of them portray character both as influencing action and as influenced by it. All employ a minute and even tedious realism in setting forth conditions just as they were in English life. All are permeated with sentimentalism, and all are primarily concerned with enforcing an ideal of manners that grew naturally in an age which made so much of manners,—or an ideal of deportment, we may better say, since manners were coming to be more and more complicated with graver questions of morality. Prolix as they seem to-day, and to the average person almost unreadable, they exercised a tremendous power over contemporary readers; nor can we deny to them qualities of universal and enduring interest. Richardson had a genuine sympathy with his characters, and he had a real genius for analyzing the senti-

ments of the human, especially the female, heart. Alfred de Musset went so far in his enthusiasm as to call *Clarissa Harlowe* the best novel in the world. Saner is the judgment of Carlyle, who declares that in the single ability to *see* things, itself, however, no very high excellence, Defoe and Richardson may rank not far below Homer.

There were those, nevertheless, who did not regard Richardson's work favorably, among them one who, setting out as Richardson's satirist, ended by becoming his compeer and in some respects his superior. This was Henry Fielding.

Henry
Fielding,
1707-1754.

Fielding came of a family of rank in the southwestern counties, was educated at Eton and at Leyden, and led a somewhat irregular life in London, intending for the law and becoming finally a magistrate, but more attracted at first to writing for the stage. He had produced a number of comedies, satires, and essays of an indifferent quality when Richardson's *Pamela* was published, and its character and popularity immediately excited his contempt. Robustly masculine himself and a thorough man of the world, he had little liking for Richardson's sentimental letter-budgets with their feminine standards of propriety and their very doubtful if well-intended morality. He regarded their author as somewhat of a prig; he felt that human beings are compact of good and evil inscrutably intertwined; and he knew that to virtue and vice, rewards and punishments are not distributed upon any worldly basis nor in any calculable proportions. He took for nominal hero, therefore, a brother of Pamela Andrews, represented him in the service of a designing mistress, and began, as a burlesque, *The History of Joseph Andrews*. He became so interested, however, that almost before he was aware, he had written a long novel with few burlesque features. It was published in 1742, and accepted at once upon its own merits. Though crude in some respects, like the work which inspired it, it excelled that in its admirable comic spirit, and portrayed in the simple-hearted, eccentric Parson Adams, its real hero, a character that deserves unstinted praise.

Fielding's next work of fiction, *Jonathan Wild the Great* (1743), was a mock biography intended wholly as a satire. He wrote but two more genuine novels before the failure of his health and the sad voyage to Lisbon, where he died at the age of forty-seven. *The History of Tom Jones* was published in 1749, *Amelia* in 1751. The former, which contains the admirable portrait of Squire Western, is unquestionably his best work—one of the classics, indeed, of fiction. It is composed in the more ordinary narrative style, without Richardson's epistolary machinery. The author, however, is lavish of comment, constantly coming forward for a chat with the reader upon the course of his story or upon the conduct of life.

"As we determined, when we first sat down to write this history, to flatter no man, but to guide our pen throughout by the directions of truth, we are obliged to bring our hero on the stage in a much more disadvantageous manner than we could wish; and to declare honestly, even at his first appearance, that it was the universal opinion of Mr. Allworthy's family that he was certainly born to be hanged."—Book III., chapter ii.

Tom Jones is a "foundling" of no very remarkable qualities, a healthy animal who goes through life not seriously troubled with scruples of conscience, and who, it must be confessed, comes out in the end much better than he deserves. The plot, though good, is by no means perfect, the adventures are sometimes forced, the scenes are often offensive to our taste, and the moral effect is open to question. But the novel has a dozen merits, not the least of which is that it is essentially and undeniably true to life. That the life is comparatively low is an accident; the book is none the less human because it cannot be a universal human comedy. Apart from its sordidness, the realism is of the best kind. Richardson often depends for lifelikeness on a multitude of petty details; Fielding keeps to the larger outlines and draws with a surer hand. Richardson's characters, hanging for days on punctilios of conduct, are such slaves to motives and to the author's moral purpose that, though convincingly real in their separate acts,

they leave a total impression verging on caricature; Fielding's are free and impulsive, and constantly guilty of inconsistencies in action, which, as being neither more nor less than human, the author is not concerned either to explain or defend. Of Fielding, therefore, it may safely be said that, whether the English novel was actually created by Richardson or Defoe or still earlier, it attained in his hands the form and character which has been the ideal of the best novelists since. Mr. Saintsbury declares that in the "practical recreation and presentation of life" Fielding first did in English prose (upon the model of Cervantes in Spanish) what Shakespeare and others had done before him in poetry and the drama.

Tobias Smollett, the next in order of the important novelists of the period, was a Scotchman of gentle birth who began life as a surgeon's apprentice and shipped in the navy as surgeon's mate. After some rough experiences at sea and in the West Indies, he settled in London and pursued a literary life not unlike Fielding's, writing satires, essays, plays, and novels. His important novels are *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748), for which he drew freely upon his own career; *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle* (1751); and a considerably later and better one, written in letter form, *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker* (1771). The two first named, confessed imitations of Le Sage's *Gil Blas*, are rather in the nature of picaresque tales, depending less on plot than adventure, but employing the same intense realism of which Defoe was master. The last, written while the author was dying in Italy, is a work of infinite humor, and one of the very best pictures we have of contemporary English life and manners. All unfortunately contain scenes of much coarseness and brutality—practical jokes, for instance, of the lowest description are one of the sources of interest—and that Thackeray should have pronounced them "delightful" is a testimony to his own thorough seasoning in both life and literature. They belong to their century, and it was

*Tobias
Smollett,
1721-1771.*

"little Gothic castle" at Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, published his famous little "Gothic" or mediæval, romance of *The Castle of Otranto*, a pretended translation of a black-letter Italian original. Enchanted helmets, trap-doors and spectres, sighing portraits and bleeding statues, are a part of the machinery of the tale, which, the poet Gray reported, made him and his little-hardened Cambridge friends "afraid to go to bed o'nights." It had a number of successors, notably William Beckford's oriental tale of the Caliph *Vathek* (1784), Mrs. Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), and Matthew Gregory Lewis's *The Monk* (1795). Finally, the revolutionary social theories that were rife toward the end of the century affected fiction and inspired tales of the type of William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (1794). But though all these books were extremely popular, none of them reached greatness. They interest us chiefly as exponents of the reactionary tendency which, on the side of pure romance, was in another century to culminate in the positive genius of the great "Wizard of the North."

CHAPTER XV

MIDDLE AND LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—AGE OF JOHNSON AND BURKE—1740-1798.

<i>George II.</i> 1727-1760	JOHNSON	Montesquieu
<i>Jacobite Rebellion.</i> 1745	GOLDSMITH	Voltaire
<i>British power established in</i>	SHERIDAN	Rousseau
<i>India.</i> 1757	GIBBON	Bernardin St.
<i>Accession of George III.</i> 1760	BURKE	Pierre
<i>War of American Independ-</i>	THOMSON	Kant
<i>ence.</i> 1775	COLLINS	Klopstock
<i>Wm. Pitt the Younger, Prime</i>	GRAY	Lessing
<i>Minister</i> 1783	COWPER	Herder
<i>Impeachment of Hastings.</i> 1786	CRABBE	Goethe
<i>Outbreak of the French Revo-</i>	BLAKE	Schiller
<i>lution</i> 1789	BURNS	Franklin

Turning now from our sketch of the rise of the novel, we take up again the thread of miscellaneous prose and poetry where we left it at the death of Swift and Pope. The political history of the time requires little comment. The House of Hanover was firmly established, as it remains to this day. The policies of the nation were chiefly determined by her statesmen, especially Walpole the "Peace Minister," and Pitt the fiery "Patriot" and "Great Commoner." Under the former, while the country apparently stood still, the foundations of free trade were laid and a colonial policy was shaped; under the latter, with Clive extending the British empire over India and Wolfe defending it in America, the nation rose from insularity to her modern position among the great powers of the world. Something of this, of course, is in her literature; but it is to be noted that through this period letters do not keep so close to affairs of state as they had done since the time of the Restoration.

With the rise of the Commons, the spread of culture, and the freedom of the press from political or clerical interference, writers became more independent of both Court and Church. We have seen how the publication of Pope's *Homer* was significant of the fact that authors were beginning to look for their rewards less to noble patrons than to the reading public. The increasing intrusion of the bourgeois element into literature itself, with its consequent influence on style and the whole range of mental, moral, and artistic standards, is exemplified in Defoe, in Richardson, and above all in the novels of Fielding, who set forth in his characters the average, democratic, unheroic man as scarcely Shakespeare himself in the shadow of feudalism cared to do. We shall henceforth be more and more concerned with the aspirations and passions that throb in the hearts of the common people.

At the same time the social and intellectual ideals of the century did not materially change. There were, on the surface at least, the same deference to conventionality, the same satisfaction with mere excellence of form, the same exaltation of "good sense." Philosophy was much affected by the thinking classes, but intellectual force decreased with imaginative decline, and a rather narrow, specious philosophy was the guide of life. The critical spirit was still rife. Genius was understood to mean talent or propensity, or, at the best, general rather than exalted powers. Reynolds painted real portraits instead of idealized Madonnas or symbolic saints. Garrick, in default of any highly original, creative drama, reinterpreted Shakespeare and Dryden. Nor is it without significance that Doctor Johnson, the great "literary dictator," should to-day be characterized by dictionaries of biography, not first as essayist, or philosopher, or poet, all of which in some degree he was, but as lexicographer. The prevalent respect for well-tried conventions, the calm submission to the dictates of reason, the earnest desire for universal law and order, are all apparent in the labors of this man, valorously working to regulate into precision our language,



SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS
RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

DAVID GARRICK
JAMES BOSWELL

the most indispensable single instrument of social well-being. If Sterne incarnated the sentimentalism of his day, Doctor Johnson incarnated its conservatism and rational morality, and his name very properly heads the roll of middle eighteenth century writers.

Johnson was the son of a Lichfield bookseller. His struggles with poverty and constitutional disease as a student at Oxford, as the unsuccessful schoolmaster of "Edial Hall," and as a miscellaneous hack-writer of London's "Grub Street" in one of the lowest periods of English letters, are all well known. Still more clearly does he stand out to us in the days of his later triumph, when, as part founder of the Literary Club at the Turk's Head, he gathered about him that remarkable group of diverse celebrities:—Garrick, the actor, his former pupil, who had come up to London with him; Joshua Reynolds, the painter; Goldsmith, like himself a struggling and ultimately successful author; Gibbon, the historian; Burke, the barrister and politician of brilliant promise; and the young Scotchman, James Boswell. It is the sole but very sufficient distinction of the last-named that he became Johnson's biographer. Johnson was one of the best conversationalists that ever lived. His hard experiences in life had been turned to a true philosopher's uses, and he was ready to deliver himself, with critical insight and with the confidence of authority, on all sorts of subjects. "Sir, it is not so." "Sir, we are all more or less governed by interest." "Sir, a man may be so much of everything that he is nothing of anything." "Madam, it is more from carelessness about truth than from intentional lying, that there is so much falsehood in the world." Boswell, attracted by the great man's character and wisdom, became his faithful attendant for a number of years and kept a minute record of all that he said and did. There is perhaps no book extant which fulfils more perfectly the purpose of a biography—to present its subject as he was in the flesh—than this book of Boswell's; and through it, and through Reynolds's speaking

*Samuel
Johnson,
1709–1784.*

portrait, it has come about that the personality and opinions of Doctor Johnson are more familiar to us than his written works.

The works, nevertheless, are of enduring merit. Some of them are in poetic form. *London*, a satire in couplets, was published as early as 1738, and was not less popular and not less artificial than Pope's satires of the same period. *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (1749), in imitation of Juvenal, is of the same didactic nature, but rises, through its melancholy moralizing, to some degree of poetic impressiveness. Besides these there are several excellent *Prologues* (one of which contains the lines on Shakespeare, "Each change of many-colored life he drew" etc.) and a forgotten tragedy, *Irene* (1749). The miscellaneous character of his prose has been mentioned. He conducted *The Rambler*, 1750-1752, and somewhat later *The Idler*, after the conventional periodical plan. The *Dictionary* also was the work of these middle years, and was the occasion of two remarkable pieces of prose—the pathetic "Preface," and the more than pathetic "Letter" in which, in language unapproached for sincerity and dignified scorn, he refused the too tardily offered assistance of Lord Chesterfield, and sounded the death-knell of patronage. *The Prince of Abyssinia*, later known as *Rasselas*, was published in 1759. It is a strange compound of tale, novel, and moral essay, upon a theme little different from the old one of the vanity of human wishes. Lastly there are the well-known *Lives of the Poets*, published 1779-1781 as prefaces to an edition of the English poets—hackwork it may be, but hackwork dignified and ennobled beyond the connotation of that name.

To later generations the name of Johnson has often stood for a style—the Latinized, the ponderous, the "sesquipedalian." Goldsmith told him that if he were to write a fable about little fishes he would make them "talk like whales." His prose is indeed very much what we might expect of a lexicographer. Yet the buckram of his diction is not at all ill suited to the often stiff texture of his thought. Moreover, it is not all of this inflexible cast, neither is the style all of the man.

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THOMAS GRAY
SAMUEL JOHNSON

EDMUND BURKE
OLIVER GOLDSMITH

"Ye who listen with credulity to the whispers of fancy, and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope; who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow,—attend to the history of Rasselas, prince of Abyssinia."

Thus begins *Rasselas*; and though the artificial little tale may seem a trifle antiquated to-day, there is a charm about it that holds attention from this gently melodious opening sentence to the close, and that changing tastes and standards cannot wholly superannuate. In the *Lives of the Poets*, moreover, not only is Johnson's style mellowed by years, but the words are so weighted with the wisdom of a great moralist and interpreter of human nature that we find ourselves listening to this alone, unconscious of the language that conveys it. The last of the literary dictators was worthy of his lineage.

A striking parallel to the miscellaneous character of Johnson's writings is presented by the product of Oliver Goldsmith, the man who stood nearest to the great dictator in both friendship and fame. A less likely person to attain such a position than Goldsmith was, can scarcely be imagined. A poor Irish clergyman's son, he was a sore trial to his parents and his school-masters, who almost without exception declared him a dunce. When he was ready to set out for himself, according to his own account he narrowly escaped emigration to America, where doubtless he would never have been heard of again. He drifted instead to Edinburgh and the continent, and finally, in destitution, to London. Somehow, anyhow,—for bread and butter was his sole aim, and that only when hunger urged,—he fell into hack-work. Slowly some of his periodical essays began to attract attention, especially his "Chinese" satires on English society, entitled *A Citizen of the World* (1760–1761). At this time, Johnson, who had preceded him by twenty years, had attained to fame and a prospective pension and the ease of that armchair where he could "fold his legs and have out his talk." Goldsmith was

Oliver
Goldsmith,
1728–1774.

inevitably drawn into the circle which he was to help make immortal; and from time to time he may be seen moving across the pages of Boswell, shoulder to shoulder, if one may speak metaphorically, with the great philosopher. If, indeed, with his lumpish little body and pock-marked face he was more unprepossessing even than the deformed Pope, nature made him ironical amends in the goodness of his heart—in a combination of prudence and generosity by which he was enabled to make friends and keep them and die in the end two thousand pounds in debt. Gibbon and Burke might make game of his simplicity, but they loved him and they knew his worth; and they lived to see his memory honored by thousands to whom their learning and eloquence were but a name.

Of his meagre verse, the four hundred lines each of *The Traveller* (1764) and *The Deserted Village* (1770) make up the major portion. The one is the meditation of a wanderer, who, from an Alpine height, surveys the world and concludes that under whatsoever government we dwell, "Our own felicity we make or find." The other, in which the poet looks back to "sweet Auburn," the half-real scene of his youth, in genuine pity for what he supposed was its ruin through the evils of landlordism, declares that

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."

Both are in the moralizing strain of Johnson, but sweeter in their humanity and less declamatory in tone. They do not rise to the level of the rapt contemplation in Gray's *Elegy*, but their dissolving views of happiness are more winsome, and they get closer than Gray to rustic life and domestic joys—almost as close as Burns. Moreover, the classic couplet received at Goldsmith's hands once more and almost for the last time the polish of its best days, and his lines are therefore often as quotable as Pope's.

The account goes that Doctor Johnson was the agent who succeeded in selling the manuscript of *The Vicar of Wakefield* and so enabled Goldsmith at a critical moment to pay his rent.

Be that as it may, the story was published in 1766, to the very great augmentation of Goldsmith's fame with posterity, who have worn out a hundred editions of the work. It is a domestic novel, with a plot almost as aimless as the author's own life; the sole object seems to be to get the good Dr. Primrose and his family into as much misery as possible and then out again. But it afforded Goldsmith the means for displaying his very best qualities—his humor, his tenderness, and his power to portray sympathetically such scenes and characters as he had known in early life. It is, as Goethe called it, a prose-idyll. The style is the same that had already been employed so effectively in the essays—the modern English made smooth by Dryden, Swift, Addison, and Johnson, but in this case lowered to the colloquial key, lightened with Irish humor, stripped of needless dignity and pedantry, easy, flexible, lucid. This style is of itself one of the main secrets of Goldsmith's perennial charm.

"I was pleased with the poor man's friendship for two reasons: because I knew that he wanted mine, and I knew him to be friendly as far as he was able. He was known in our neighborhood by the character of the poor gentleman, that would do no good when he was young, though he was not yet thirty. He would at intervals talk with great good sense; but, in general, he was fondest of the company of children, whom he used to call harmless little men. He was famous, I found, for singing them ballads, and telling them stories; and seldom went out without something in his pockets for them—a piece of gingerbread, or an half-penny whistle. He generally came for a few days into our neighborhood once a year, and lived upon the neighbors' hospitality. He sat down to supper among us, and my wife was not sparing of her gooseberry wine. The tale went round; he sung us old songs, and gave the children the story of the Buck of Beverland, with the history of Patient Grissel, the adventures of Catskin, and then Fair Rosamond's Bower. Our cock, which always crew at eleven, now told us it was time for repose; but an unforeseen difficulty started about lodging the stranger—all our beds were already taken up, and it was too late to send him to the next alehouse. In this dilemma, little Dick offered him his part of the bed, if his brother Moses would let him lie with him. 'And I,' cried Bill, 'will give Mr.

Burchell my part, if my sisters will take me to theirs.' 'Well done, my good children,' cried I; 'hospitality is one of the first Christian duties. The beast retires to its shelter, and the bird flies to its nest; but helpless man can only find refuge from his fellow creature. The greatest stranger in this world was He that came to save it. He never had a house, as if willing to see what hospitality was left remaining among us. Deborah, my dear,' cried I to my wife, 'give those boys a lump of sugar each; and let Dick's be the largest, because he spoke first.'"—(Chapter VI.)

On yet another tablet of fame was "poor Noll" to carve his name in very plain letters. In 1768 his first play, *The Good-Natured Man* was produced at Covent Garden, and five years later, just the year before his death, his second, *She Stoops to Conquer*. Better known than even the *Vicar of Wakefield*, *She Stoops to Conquer* requires no extended comment. Purer than almost any comedy from the time of the Restoration, it is at the same time more abundantly charged with sprightliness and humor. Tony Lumpkin is the incarnation of all that was simple, delightful, and droll in the author himself; and for anything more fascinating than the entire play we should have to go back, not to Congreve and Wycherley, but to Shakespeare himself—which is surely sufficient praise for the man of whom none would have dared to prophesy that he would ever wield a pen.

Close upon the heels of this last important work of Goldsmith's followed two comedies by another Irish writer that share with it the distinction of being to-day the most familiar English plays outside of Shakespeare. They were, *Richard Brinsley Sheridan*, first, *The Rivals*, produced at Covent Garden in 1751–1816. 1775, and, second and much more important, *The School for Scandal*, played at Drury Lane in 1777. Together with several other plays they were the work of a very young man, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who succeeded Garrick as proprietor of Drury Lane Theatre and was promptly made a member of the Literary Club, though politics rather than literature was to be his future career. The plays are comedies of manners, not of

sentiment, aiming mostly at pure fun, partly by ludicrous situations and still more by witty dialogue. The first-named contains the celebrated characters of Sir Anthony Absolute and Mrs. Malaprop; the second, Sir Peter and Lady Teazle.

Two more members of Johnson's Club were to crown the achievements of this century in prose with works of the highest import. We have scarcely been called upon to take note of historical writing since the time of King Alfred and of the *Saxon Chronicle*, with a possible exception in favor of Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* in the seventeenth century. Even that was not published till the eighteenth; and it was left for the critical eighteenth century to take up this kind of writing in earnest. Goldsmith himself wrote histories, but Goldsmith was neither learned nor critical. Thomas Warton wrote a history of English poetry after a plan which the poet Gray resigned to him. Hume and Robertson, both Scotchmen, and the former a great philosopher, wrote important histories of England and Scotland respectively. But the work which eclipsed them all is that which Edward Gibbon suddenly conceived at Rome, "amid the ruins of the Capitol," in 1764, wrought out in patience and secrecy, and gave to the world between 1776 and 1788. By the vastness of its plan, its philosophic breadth, its extreme accuracy, and its vigorous, weighty, and often gorgeous style, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* ranks at once among the literary monuments of the eighteenth century and the great histories of the world.

The other member of Johnson's Club referred to above, the last of our group, and perhaps in the eyes of the world at large the greatest, was the political philosopher, Edmund Burke. Like Goldsmith, who was his senior by two months only, Burke was born in Ireland (in Dublin), and like him came to London a poor adventurer. He began by publishing several essays, one of which; the once famous *Ideas of the Sublime and Beau-*

Edward
Gibbon,
1737-1794.

Edmund
Burke,
1729-1797.

tiful (1756), was a pioneer in the field of æsthetic criticism. Doubtless it was his philosophical acumen and literary talent that drew upon him Doctor Johnson's attention, but his own immediate ambitions turned him toward politics. He became in time secretary to Lord Rockingham and a member of Parliament, where his speeches soon made him widely famous, though for some reason not easy to explain they more often scattered than held their audiences. His grasp of public affairs, remarkable from the first, grew with experience, and his *Thoughts on the Present Discontents*, issued in 1770, was recognized as the greatest political pamphlet since Swift's *On the Conduct of the Allies*. The struggle with the American colonies called forth the well known speeches *On American Taxation* (1774) and *On Conciliation with America* (1775), and the *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol* (1777), in all of which he stoutly opposed the war policy of the Tory administration and brought his arguments and splendid rhetoric to the support of the fundamental principles for which the colonies were contending. Later, during the agitation of Indian affairs, roused by what he regarded as an abuse of the privileges of office and of power, he led in the memorable impeachment of Warren Hastings.

Up to this point Burke's course was clear, if not always smooth, and under happier circumstances he might well have retired and closed his days in peace. The second Pitt, who had succeeded to the Ministry in 1783, was, like Walpole, a peace minister, and his sympathy with the humanizing tendency of the time—with everything that helped to cement the brotherhood of men—promised much for the spread of the democratic spirit. Unfortunately for England, this same spirit on the continent, goaded to desperation, precipitated the horrors of the French Revolution. Thereupon Burke, though by that time sixty years of age, was moved to further efforts, and the result was the maturest flower of his genius—the series of works extending from the *Reflections on the Revolution in France* in 1790 to the *Letters on a Regicide Peace* in 1796 (the year also of his *Letter*

to a Noble Lord). In these works he seemed to many to have strangely shifted from his earlier democratic attitude, for he declared his horror of the French Revolution and opposed it to his last breath. But the inconsistency is only seeming: he was all the time at heart a conservative of his century. He had the profoundest reverence for institutions. Society and government as they were constituted were, in his eyes, too delicately organized, too solemnly consecrated by time, to be recklessly overthrown. His democracy was a belief in the proper privileges of every class, and he saw in the Revolution an overturning of certain privileges which was no less violent and unjust than the abuses which had fomented it. His course was after all in accord with his theories, and his passionate sincerity won him admiration even in the lonely hours of his opposition before the course of events brought, for a time at least, a promise of ultimate vindication. He died in 1797, with England and France in the midst of their desolating and long-to-be-continued war.

Burke's greatness lay in the political acumen of which we have spoken—the philosophical insight that enabled him to refer all action to, and test it by, the fundamental principles of right and wrong. His literary strength lay first in his talent for putting these principles and applications into telling and easily remembered aphoristic form, and second in the splendor of his rhetoric, a rhetoric that is sometimes almost too florid, but always vehement and impressive. Few speakers or writers have illuminated their thoughts more freely from the stored wisdom of the past, or brought to them such support from the fertility of their own imagination. So poetic, indeed, was Burke's temperament that he was no less a prophet of the dawning era of imagination than he was the last great spokesman of that prosaic "age of reason" which had virtually died before his death. Across more than a century his denunciation of any attempt to justify the atrocities of the Revolution rings yet with undiminished vigor:—

"We are alarmed into reflection; our minds (as it has long since been observed) are purified by terror and pity; our weak, unthinking pride is humbled under the dispensations of a mysterious wisdom. Some tears might be drawn from me if such a spectacle were exhibited on the stage. I should be truly ashamed of finding in myself that superficial, theatric sense of painted distress, whilst I could exult over it in real life. . . . No theatric audience in Athens would bear what has been borne, in the midst of the real tragedy of this triumphal day: a principal actor weighing, as it were in scales hung in a shop of horrors, so much actual crime against so much contingent advantage, —and after putting in and out weights, declaring that the balance was on the side of the advantages. They would not bear to see the crimes of new democracy posted as in a ledger against the crimes of old despotism, and the bookkeepers of politics finding democracy still in debt, but by no means unable or unwilling to pay the balance. . . . Justifying perfidy and murder for public benefit, public benefit would soon become the pretext, and perfidy and murder the end—until rapacity, malice, revenge, and fear more dreadful than revenge, could satiate their insatiable appetites. Such must be the consequences of losing, in the splendor of these triumphs of the rights of men, all natural sense of wrong and right."

The other prose writers of this period, considered purely as writers,—the naturalist, Gilbert White of Selborne, the biographer, James Boswell, the moral and political philosophers, William Paley, Adam Smith, William Godwin, even the excellent letter writers, "Junius," Lord Chesterfield, Horace Walpole,—pale to indistinction beside the brilliance of Burke. Boswell, indeed, made a great book, but it has already and most properly been described in connection with Johnson, by whose faithfully reflected greatness it shines; it is doubtful whether Boswell could have written a good biography of a silent great man. With Burke, therefore, we may best conclude our survey of the century's prose; and it may be interesting to compare with the passage last quoted the brief citations that were made from Swift and Addison in the early years, and from Johnson in the middle, to see how this improved instrument which Dryden and his fellows bequeathed to the century has fared in its hands. For this purpose a few sentences are absurdly inadequate, the more

so as each fragment takes its character from the idiosyncrasy of its author quite as much as from the general tendency of its time. Yet it is possible to detect even in these brief examples, the certain evidence of change. Without losing any of its acquired regularity and precision, prose has clearly added a new strength and splendor. What in Swift was pedestrian, in Burke takes wings; and we are reminded of the days before its discipline and severe subjection to law, when, under the spell of men like Taylor, Browne, and Milton, prose with all its imperfections was an instrument of almost poetic range and power. Macaulay has commented upon the fact that Burke's early prose, though upon an æsthetic theme, is curiously unadorned, whereas the political essays of his last years are almost unbecomingly gorgeous. The change was typical; it brings us indeed to the verge of a great movement that makes the close of this century another landmark in literary history; and as we turn from the prose of the century to complete the record of its poetry, we may scan somewhat more narrowly the nature of the reaction that was working the change.

It should be said at once that we have here to deal with what is commonly known as the Romantic Revival. This revival means, briefly, that men were beginning to weary of their narrow range of domestic and political interests, and of the repression and stiff formality to which they had so long subjected themselves. They demanded to feel as well as think, to enjoy without criticising, and to give freer scope to imagination. They were returning with relief to the primary sources of emotion—to out-of-door nature and the simpler relations of life; and they were opening anew old sources of wonder—the enchantment of foreign lands, of ancient fable and mediæval legend, and all the shadowy mysteries of the unseen and the unknown. This may seem a vague description of romanticism, but vagueness is of its essence; it refuses to be circumscribed by a definition, or comprehended in a list of particular features. It is the spirit of

*The
Romantic
Revival.*

escape from the matter-of-fact into the realm of passion, imagination, and aspiration, and the forms of beauty in which it shapes its ideals are the precise opposites of classic purity, restraint, and repose. Naturally such a spirit finds in poetry its fullest manifestation.

Much of the initial influence of this romantic revival is to be ascribed to James Thomson, a poet of the earlier half of the century. Thomson was a Scotchman who was brought up on the Border, educated at Edinburgh, and drawn south to pursue his worldly and other fortunes. As early as 1726 he began the publication of *The Seasons* with his poem on "Winter," to be followed with "Summer" and "Spring" in the succeeding years, and concluded with "Autumn" in 1730. It was immediately popular (notwithstanding its difference from the manner of Pope, who praised it himself), and Thomson was looked upon as a rising poet. But the indifferent plays and other things which he wrote failed to add to his reputation, until, in the very last year of his life, he published the admirable allegory of *The Castle of Indolence* (1748). His death followed Pope's by only four years.

In one respect Thomson's verse followed the current fashion. It is full of frigid personification, conventional epithets, and pedantic paraphrases. Pestilence "stalks," Discord utters "jangling words," Wisdom "dejects his watchful eye;" evening is "humid," winter "gelid;" cows are the "milky drove;" eggs are "ovarious food." But while these things doubtless helped to make Thomson acceptable to his time, it is other things that, from our point of view, give him his real distinction. In the first place he revolted from the domination of the heroic couplet. *The Seasons* is in blank verse, not infrequently Miltonic in cadence; and in the *Castle of Indolence* he revived, as Shenstone did in *The Schoolmistress*, the Spenserian stanza, which had been neglected for a hundred years. In the second place he revolted from the all but universal town poetry and sought his inspira-

tion in the fields and woods. His "Winter" is filled with observations evidently made in his boyhood in the north country:—

"The foodless Wilds

Pour forth their brown inhabitants. The Hare,
Though timorous of heart, and hard beset
By death in various forms, dark snares and dogs,
And more unpitying men, the garden seeks,
Urged on by fearless want. The bleating kine
Eye the bleak Heaven, and next the glistening earth,
With looks of dumb despair; then, sad dispersed,
Dig for the withered herb through heaps of snow."

When these imaginative pictures of external nature are combined, as in the *Castle of Indolence*, with some of the most mellifluous verse between Spenser and Shelley, the difference between Thomson and Pope or Johnson may be sharply felt.

Another exponent of mingled classic and romantic tendencies was the ill-starred Collins, upon whose slender volume of a dozen *Odes*, published in 1747, rests a slender but secure fame. The "Pindaric" ode to *The Passions*, beginning "When Music, heav'nly maid, was young," has long been a favorite for recitation. Of higher purely poetic merit are the delicate, unrhymed Horatian *Ode to Evening* and the two exquisite little stanzas of *How Sleep the Brave*:—

"How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallow'd mold,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

"By fairy hands their knell is rung;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell, a weeping hermit, there."

Collins's romanticism reveals itself more particularly in his feeling for the supernatural. Of nature he cannot be called a close observer; he feels more than he sees. Yet his characterization is sure, as at least one phrase in the lines just quoted shows; and the instinctive manner in which, in his impressionistic ode, he has depicted the various sights and sounds of evening, from the bat that "flits by on leathern wing" to the "upland fallows grey" that reflect the lake's "last cool gleam," compels us to revert to Milton himself to find an equally inspired poet of the twilight hour.

Much better known than either Thomson or Collins is a third poet of this unobtrusive school. Thomas Gray, the author of the *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, * was born in London but spent most of his life as a recluse at Cambridge. He was a scholar of really prodigious acquirements, especially well versed in European history and languages. His letters, it should be said, though never intended for publication, are among the very best of an age of letter-writing, excelling even the more familiar epistles of his friend, Horace Walpole. They show Gray to have been a lover of the wildly rugged and picturesque in nature, a thing quite unusual in his day. His poetic product, meagre in amount, painfully elaborated, and hesitatingly published, reduces itself for the average student to four short poems, and for the wider public to one. The *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College* was written in 1742 and published anonymously in 1747; the *Elegy*, probably begun also at the earlier date, was published in the same way in 1751. Two years later these were published under the author's name, with four other poems, including the delightful *Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat* (Mr. Walpole's—"Drowned in a tub of gold fishes"). Four years

* The original title runs, "An Elegy Wrote in a Country Church Yard." This substitution of the preterite form for the perfect participle in the strong verbs gained such wide currency among scholars and writers of the eighteenth century that it seems strange the regular form should have recovered its position.

later still, in 1757, appeared the Pindaric odes—*The Progress of Poesy* ("Awake, Æolian lyre, awake") and *The Bard* ("Ruin seize thee, ruthless King").

It is easy to point out the conventional notes in these poems—their personifications, apostrophes, and the like. They are markedly elegant; their absolutely classical finish is one of their highest merits; the Pindarics are of the correct type, not the mistakenly lawless type of Cowley; the quatrains are as chaste, if



THE CHURCHYARD OF GRAY'S ELEGY

At Stoke Poges

not quite so cold, as if they were chiselled in marble. Yet Gray wears his elegance with a difference. That he should have used lyric quatrains, or odes with their intricate harmonies, at all, is the first note of this difference. That he should have followed his imagination into "dark unfathom'd caves of ocean" or into "climes beyond the solar road," is another. That he should have suffused his verse with a Penserosan melancholy, that he should have haunted in fancy "the cool sequestered vale of life," in genuine sympathy with village Hampdens and inglorious Miltons, with rustic morals and pious tears, are yet others. More-

over, it is easy to forget that the seeming conventionality of his verses is due in part to our familiarity with them—a conventionality of his own creating. The *Elegy* is not the most original of poems, but neither is it the least original. In its time and place it is not unlike a well-spring in a desert, with its counterparts so few or so far across the parched sands that they cannot cheapen its pricelessness. It has the rare distinction, paralleled only by Wordsworth's great *Ode*, of having almost usurped its class-name, so that other English elegies, even greater ones, must be henceforth called rather "elegiac poems." The elegy is Gray's; and with its purity, its simplicity, its melody, its noble sentiment and tender humanity, it is the rightful and immortal classic of the middle eighteenth century.

As Gray entered upon the last decade of his life, his linguistic studies were extended to Celtic and Norse, including Icelandic. Incidentally he produced several poetic paraphrases from the literatures in those tongues—from the Welsh, for instance, *The Triumphs of Owen*, and from the Norse, *The Fatal Sisters* and *The Descent of Odin*. The opening lines of the last-named may be cited:—

"Uprose the King of Men with speed,
And saddled straight his coal-black steed;
Down the yawning steep he rode,
That leads to Hela's drear abode."

These paraphrases are not always taken into consideration in the estimate of Gray's poetic product. But it is of significance that the poet who, before the middle of the century, wrote a fairly conventional ode upon his college in which schoolboys "chase the rolling circle's speed," should by 1761 be engaged upon work like this, work which points unmistakably to a shift of poetic interest. In fact, the seventh decade of the century was one of somewhat marked romantic impulse, and it is possible to point to at least three contemporaneous events significant of the change.

The first was the appearance, in 1762, of James Macpherson's *Fingal*, a kind of epic which was alleged to be a translation of the work of an ancient Gaelic poet by the name of Ossian. So much of it as may be traced back to Gaelic originals has certainly been freely remodelled; much is doubtless Macpherson's own composition. It is all in rhythmical, often metrical, prose, and generally vague and turgid.

"Many a voice and many a harp, in tuneful sounds arose. Of Fingal's noble deeds they sung; of Fingal's noble race. And sometimes, on the lonely sound, was heard the name of Ossian. . .

"The king stood by the stone of Lubar. Thrice he reared his terrible voice. The deer started from the fountains of Cromla. The rocks shook on all their hills. Like the noise of a hundred mountain-streams, that burst, and roar, and foam! like the clouds that gather to a tempest on the blue face of the sky! so met the sons of the desert, round the terrible voice of Fingal."

The importance of this lies, not in its intrinsic value, but in the zest with which it was received—in its evidence of a craving for imaginative stimulus which could find satisfaction

even in mock sublimity. Much more important, epoch-making indeed, were the *Reliques of Ancient*

English Poetry—the old folk ballads, which have been described in an earlier chapter, but which only at the date at which we have now arrived were gathered into an accessible book form, by Thomas Percy.* The influence of these upon the progress of English poetry ever since has been quite incalculable,

for the ballad became in the next century as conspicuous a type as the ode was in this. In the third place, in this same decade rose the precocious genius of the much lamented Thomas Chatterton—a youth who, struggling less successfully than others against the starvation that assailed poor author-recruits in London, took

* Some of the ballads had been printed before, both separately and in collections. But Percy's collection, which was based chiefly on a Folio MS. in early seventeenth century handwriting, practically superseded all others.

poison and died before he was eighteen years old. Chatterton was imitating antique poetry as early as 1764, when at his Bristol home he lay on the hillside dreaming upon the "cunning handiwork so fine" of the old church of St. Mary Redcliffe; and in 1765 he began to write the poems which he pretended were the composition of an early poet and which are often known as the "Rowley forgeries." The first collected edition was in 1777. The poems are the work of a boy, but of a very gifted boy, and several, such as *The Balade of Charitie*, and the Shakespearean drine in *Ælla*, cannot be refused high praise.

Naturally the great Dictator of the age, the representative of its conservatism, set his face steadily against this movement.

Goldsmith, too, notwithstanding his romantic instincts, wrote couplets like Pope and moralized like Johnson. But others were quietly following the

William
Cowper,
1731-1800.

new lead, and some twelve years after the death of Gray and Chatterton, just as Johnson's long career came to its close, there appeared a group of four widely scattered poets in whom the changing spirit became increasingly manifest. The eldest of these was William Cowper. Cowper's life, with its clouds and disappointments, his extreme sensitiveness, his recurrent attacks of insanity in which he believed that his soul was lost and more than once attempted suicide, his retirement under the care of friends at Olney upon the Ouse, where he solaced himself with gardening, walking, drawing, and making squirrel-cages and rabbit-hutches for his numerous pets, have all been subjects of much interest, the more especially as they have been detailed by himself in some of the most admirable letters ever penned. But we are here concerned chiefly with his poetry, most of which was written after he was fifty years of age, as a diversion merely, and at the solicitation of friends. Somewhat earlier were a few religious hymns—"There is a fountain filled with blood," "God moves in a mysterious way," etc. His first volume of collected *Poems* was published in 1782 and was made up principally of didactic pieces in the established

couplet measure. The humorous and ever popular ballad of *John Gilpin* appeared in 1783. Then, in 1785, he published his chief poem, *The Task*, in six books, the product of a year's labor; undertaken at the suggestion of Lady Austen that he try a long poem in blank verse. His translation of Homer (1791), in the same verse, is of minor importance. One short poem, *The Castaway*, written in the last year of his life, is impressive for its gloom and the imaginative portrayal of his own condition.

In *The Task*, perhaps, and in several pieces in a similar vein—*Yardley Oak* and the elegiac *Lines on My Mother's Picture*—are to be found most pervadingly the qualities which give the recluse of Olney his modest but assured distinction. Their didacticism is for the most part neither satiric nor melancholy, as might have been expected, but kindly, cheerful, and even humorous. Therefore the "task" in composition which his friend set him seems oddly and unfortunately named. For the reader is enticed through its rambling reflections by much the same charms as lure one through a copse or wood—a mass of greener foliage, a patch of sun, a snatch of music, a bank upon which to rest and meditate.

"Lovely indeed the mimic works of Art,
But Nature's works far lovelier. . .
The air salubrious of her lofty hills,
The cheering fragrance of her dewy vales,
And music of her woods—no works of man
May rival these; these all bespeak a power
Peculiar, and exclusively her own.
Beneath the open sky she spreads the feast;
'Tis free to all—'tis every day renewed;
Who scorns it, starves deservedly at home."

Cowper gladly turns his back upon the feverish and futile strife of society, upon the toil

"Of dropping buckets into empty wells
And growing old in drawing nothing up,"

to watch the sheep stream out of the fold and over the glebe, or the loaded wain creep in from the hayfield, or to listen to the

stockdoves cooing in the pines. "God made the country," he declares, in his religious enthusiasm for the natural life, "and man made the town." It is true, he views these scenes always from the standpoint of a meditative poet, not of an actor in them, but he does what the eighteenth century writer too seldom did—he composes, in Wordsworth's phrase, "with his eye upon the object;" his sympathies are indisputably genuine—his raptures are never, to use his own words, "conjured up." It is this spirit which, in spite of all his formalism, betrays his kinship with the romanticists.

It is sometimes said that Cowper's poetry was eminently poetry for the middle classes. The same statement might be made of the more voluminous verse of George Crabbe. He was born considerably later than Cowper, but he began to write at the same time and in a not very different manner, except that he held steadfastly to the couplet, even well into the next century. Born in a borough of Suffolk on the east coast and reared in poverty, he determined to write, with entire fidelity, and for such good as it might do, the poetry of the life he knew.

George
Crabbe,
1754-1832.

"By such examples taught, I paint the cot,
As Truth will paint it and as bards will not. . . .
Can poets soothe you, when you pine for bread,
By winding myrtles round your ruin'd shed?"

Tales of the miseries of peasant life, in village or workhouse, in the field or on the sea, enlivened by character sketches or relieved by a background of natural scenery, constitute the staple of his verse. His first important poem, *The Village*, published in 1783 and actually revised by Johnson, was followed after many years by what seemed strangely belated successors, *The Borough* (1810) and *Tales of the Hall* (1819). They have not the gracious qualities of Cowper's verse, and in their naked and homely realism they may seem most unromantic. But they are intensely human, and they at least threw their weight against whatever artificial sentiment may have still existed.

William Blake, a London painter and engraver, was a poet of a very different type. In him there was nothing of the old, but the new notes which he struck were so wild and mystical, verging indeed upon madness, that it was long before their significance was seen or their value properly weighed. His only regularly issued volume of poems was the youthful *Political Sketches* of the year 1783. To these must be added *Songs of Innocence* (1789) and *Songs of Experience* (1794), which he engraved on plates along with pictorial and ornamental designs, and in this shape struck off for his friends. The poems are characterized by a strange but simple imaginativeness not unlike that of a child. "Thou fair-haired Angel of the Evening" is the way in which he addresses the evening star. The body of his work is too slight, and the character of it too unsubstantial and too incoherent, to base upon it any title to greatness; but now that our eyes are reopened to this sort of beauty, there is no missing in Blake an occasional freshness that takes us back to the Elizabethan singers, or an occasional "elfin" charm that carries us forward to Coleridge and Keats.

"I laid me down upon a bank,
Where love lay sleeping:
I heard among the rushes dank
Weeping, weeping."

Of these three poets, only Cowper, who attended Westminster School, had a fair formal education. Still farther removed from academic influences and closer to the humble life of which he sang, stood Robert Burns, the fourth of the group, and the most poetically gifted of them all. There are few who do not know the story of the Ayrshire ploughman—how, with a mind fitted for higher things and a temperament ardent beyond the measure of his will, he struggled with his hard lot of poverty and temptation; how he pored over his collections of English songs while driving his cart or walking to his labor, making songs of his own when

his hands were engaged in plowing; how he loved and lost his "Highland Mary," and loved and wronged his "bonnie Jean" Armour; how at twenty-seven he rose to fame by the publication of his Kilmarnock volume and made a brief triumphal progress to Edinburgh and through Scotland; and how he returned to the farm and Jeanie and to the pitiful occupation of inspecting liquors—"gauging ale-barrels"—until his misfortunes and frailties made final wreck of his too short life. It is under just such



THE PLOUGHMAN-POET

conditions that we might expect the note of freedom and unconventionality to be most boldly struck; and while it is possible to exaggerate Burns's independence of models—for he knew something of Shakespeare and Pope and very much of Allan Ramsay and Robert Fergusson—yet the impetus which he added to the gathering strength of romanticism lay precisely in the spontaneity of his lyric message and its sturdy declaration of the worth of the individual.

There is no list of "works" to be recorded of Burns. His volume of *Poems chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* was published in 1786 in the hope that it might bring him a sufficient return to enable him to emigrate to Jamaica. Several editions of it followed, but he published no second independent collection, though from the time when, at fifteen or earlier, he "first committed the sin of rhyme," he composed more or less continuously all his life. There are only the separate poems then to take account of, some of which, like *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, *Tam O'Shanter*, and *The Jolly Beggars*, attain a length

of several pages, but most of which are extemporaneous effusions, like *To a Mouse* and *To a Mountain Daisy*, or like the still more simply constructed songs, *Auld Lang Syne*, *Bonnie Doon*, *The Banks of Ayr*, *Highland Mary*, *Afton Water*, and scores of others. Perhaps the first thing to be noted of this luxuriant and seemingly careless product, is the fact that it is mostly in the nature of folk-poetry—the poetry of a locality and a clan. Burns's verse exercises in the literary English of his southern kinsmen are, with few exceptions, so much inferior to his native dialect poems, that they add nothing to his fame.* In verse, as in fact, he never got very far south of the border. With all his love for poetry in general he cared most for the songs of the people, and it was songs of the people that he mainly wrote. Nor is it quite possible, without some command of their Lowland Scotch dialect, to appreciate the full beauty of either poems or songs. Fortunately, it is also not quite possible to miss all, or even the major part, of their manifold charm. For beneath their simplicity, and what, at a superficial glance, looks like an essential similarity, there runs a varied revelation of native endowments any one of which would have given the poet a modest niche in the temple of fame.

The pure charm of nature, close as Burns stood to it, is perhaps one of the less conspicuous of his poetic elements. But it is by no means absent, as indeed it was never absent from Scotch poetry; even in the days of Pope's artificial pastorals Scotland had a true pastoral poet in Allan Ramsay, and it will be remembered that Thomson came from the Scottish border. So ever and again, in Burns's poems, the summer "blinks on flowery braes," or the "frosty winds blaw in the drift" while the birds cower their "chitterin wings." Not often directly cele-

* For a different view, see an article on "Burns as an English Poet," by David C. Murray, in the *Contemporary Review*, November, 1902. Mr. Murray both upholds the merit of the English poems and calls attention to the fact that there is often but a sprinkling of dialect in the others; in *Scots Wha Hae*, for instance, there are but five dialect forms. "You have but to write *o* for *a*, to insert a *v* and a double *l*, and behold! a poem without a trace of local color."

brated, Nature is yet almost omnipresent as a background—an inevitable result of the poet's delight in her changing moods and his sympathy with all her children. More distinctly in the foreground is his wide-embracing sympathy with humankind. Sentiment, deepening to love, now devout and tender, now passionate and uncontrolled, is of the very essence of the genius of him who succumbed in literature to the effusiveness of Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* and Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling*, and in life to the charms of half the women he met. It is this tenderness for hu-



THE COTTER'S SATURDAY
NIGHT

manity that lies at the base of his intensely real portraiture of characters and customs—such flashlight pictures as *Holy Fair* and *Halloween* and *The Jolly Beggars*. It is the same thing that inspires the patriotism of the martial *Scots Wha Hae wi' Wallace Bled*; that illuminates the domestic joy and peace of *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, or breathes through the fervid religious hymns which spring

not unnaturally from the lips of a consciously sinful creature; that overflows in his humor and gives warrant to the sharpest stings of his satire; and that bestows an everlasting frank upon his sometimes commonplace but always glorified moralizing,—upon “A man's a man for a' that,” or “O wad some Power the giftie gie us,” or

“To mak a happy fireside clime
For weans an' wife,
That's the true pathos an' sublime
O' human life.”

These are things that, rightfully enough, give Burns an exalted place in the hearts of all who, consciously or otherwise, read poetry for its “criticism of life.”

It remains only for a colder critical inquiry to fix upon the two or three things that give the poet his particular place in the poetic pantheon. The first of these is his originality. In one aspect this originality is more apparent than real. The novel-seeming, homely themes, the racy idioms, the irregular lines, the profuse rhymes, the tagged stanzas, are largely in maintenance of the traditions of the northern folk-poetry. But Burns gave them more than a popular vogue, and they cut sharply across the standard academic forms. Moreover Burns's essential originality is not for a moment to be questioned. He went straight to native sources,—to no Arcadian vale or Heliconian fount, but to Tarbolton and Mauchline, to the Lugar and the Cessnock. It is not in imagination alone that he sits by the ingle-cheek and eyes the upward curling smoke, not in a poem alone that the farmer salutes his old mare Maggie on a New Year's morning. We know that Holy Willie's name was really Willie; that the Tarbolton lassies lived there in the neighborhood, just as they are described; that Luath was his own dog; that it was an actual mouse, turned out of her nest by the ploughshare, that he immortalized in pathetic rhyme. In a word, Burns was wholly *natural*, and the want of naturalness was the particular curse under which poetry had too long labored; let a few such voices as his be once given a fair hearing and the old order of things would assuredly pass. And in the next and last place, Burns was wholly lyrical—a heaven-gifted, spontaneous, irrepressible singer. Every scene of his life and every feeling of his heart turned to song on his lips. Words marshalled themselves into tuneful measures, and rhymes came trooping at call. Beyond all special graces of form and every message that may be read in his verse, this singing quality impresses itself. Greater poets England has had in number—she has had no more perfect singer. And simultaneously with this reappearance in her literature of the dialect of the North, partly it may be in consequence of it, were opened anew the floodgates of song.

CHAPTER XVI

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY—AGE OF ROMANTICISM

1798–1832

<i>Battle of the Nile, 1798; Trafalgar</i> 1805 (<i>Bonaparte Emperor, 1804.</i>)	WORDSWORTH	Chateaubriand
<i>Abolition of Slave Trade</i> 1807	COLERIDGE	Fichte, Hegel
<i>War with the United States</i> .. 1812	BYRON	Schlegel
<i>Battle of Waterloo</i> 1815	SHELLEY	Richter
<i>Accession of George IV</i> 1820	KEATS	Tieck, Uhland,
<i>Catholic Emancipation Act</i> .. 1829	JANE AUSTEN	Hoffmann
<i>Accession of William IV</i> 1830	SCOTT	Beethoven
		Leopardi
		Irving, Cooper

With the year 1798 we reach another conspicuous milestone in the history of English literature. The term Augustan, which was applied to the ages of Dryden and Pope, may very properly be extended (as the term Elizabethan is often extended) to cover a generation or more that followed. But we have now reached the point when this "Augustan" era, the long time during which authority counted for more than inspiration, may be pronounced definitely closed. After the eighteenth century, there lingered but a single poet of the slightest importance—George Crabbe—who preserved any trace of reverence for the authority that was so hopelessly defunct. To all intents and purposes, the death-warrant of that authority was signed two years before the century ended.

It was the ultimate triumph of the spirit already referred to as romanticism, or naturalism, that brought this about. Men somehow found themselves impelled, at first but fitfully here and there, finally as if all together, to speak out and be natural once more, to give free rein to their feelings wheresoever they might individually be led, whether to humanity and nature, or to an idealized past, or to regions of mystery beyond the

borders of the material world. The springs of emotion were once more unsealed, and poets went roving again at will, "with a free onward impulse brushing through" all trammelling rules and traditions. The movement had long been gathering force. Now it crystallized. Now it came, not for the first time to self-consciousness—conscious protests against the narrower spirit have already been recorded—but now for the first time to something like an organized and steadily triumphant revolution. And as a concerted signal of this revolution, appeared, in the year 1798, Wordsworth and Coleridge's volume of *Lyrical Ballads*.

Wordsworth, though not the most immediately influential, was the eldest and greatest of the poets who led the revolt.

William Wordsworth, 1770-1850. Not much of romantic interest attaches to his biography. He was born among the hills of Cumberland, northwestern England, in the year 1770.

From the out-of-door influences of sky, lake, and mountain he passed to the academic atmosphere of Cambridge, and from that into the heated strife of the Revolution in France, whence he returned to England just before the terrors of the year ninety-three. What he saw and felt in France had, however, a profound influence upon his life and character. In spirit, he had flung himself ardently into the cause of the revolutionists, but he shrank in horror from the violence which they ultimately permitted themselves and lapsed into a state of agonizing disappointment and distrust. The record of the effects of this experience, of the deep spiritual change which it worked upon his maturing manhood, is found in his autobiographical poem of "the growth of a poet's mind," *The Prelude*, written a few years afterward, though not published until the year of his death. At the time, he retired to the country in company with his sister Dorothy, a woman to whose high character and lifelong service and inspiration to himself he has gratefully testified. Then began also his friendship with Coleridge, a slightly younger Cambridge man. Both were living in

Somersetshire, and it was in the course of their walks over the Quantock Hills that he and Coleridge discussed their novel theories of poetry and resolved upon the joint publication of the *Lyrical Ballads*. After the volume was issued, they went, accompanied by Dorothy Wordsworth, for a short sojourn in Germany, and upon their return, Wordsworth and his sister repaired to their native Lake country in the North. There, except for his frequent tours through the surrounding region or abroad, the poet spent the remaining fifty years of his life, first at Grasmere and later at Rydal Mount, becoming, through long residence and ever deepening sympathy, like one incorporate with the hills and dales.

The slowly matured and slowly published poetry of Wordsworth's long life makes a bulky and very uneven volume. Only the items of major importance need be enumerated. Nineteen of the poems in the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1798 were his, among them *We are Seven* and *Tintern Abbey*. To these, several were added in the second edition, which appeared in 1800. In 1807, followed a two-volume edition of *Poems*. Meanwhile the posthumously printed *Prelude* and other things had been written; it is a commonplace of criticism to say that nearly all



"PEELE CASTLE IN A STORM."

(See Wordsworth's Poem.)

his greatest poetry was written in these early years. Later publications that should be mentioned, however, were *The Excursion*, 1814; *The White Doe of Rylstone*, 1815; and especially *The River Duddon* series of sonnets, 1819-1820. He composed little after the year 1835. His poetry was never popular, as that of Scott and Byron and even many far inferior poets was. But his steadfast adherence to principles which were essen-

tially sound and which he felt confident would in due time be recognized, gained for him discerning admirers and friends. Coleridge stood by him, as did also Southey and De Quincey, who made the Lake region their home; Dr. Arnold of Rugby, and his son, delighted to spend their vacations in his neighborhood; pilgrims, like Emerson, were drawn from afar. And on Southey's death in 1843, he received the national honor of the Poet-laureateship. By the time of his own death, seven years later, the recognition thus gradually won had become a secure renown.

Wordsworth's ideas of the functions of the poet and the theories with which he set about reforming English poetry were very definitely stated in the prose prefaces which accompanied his poems. In the second edition of *His Poetic Creed*. the *Lyrical Ballads* he declared that his purpose had been to take from humble and rustic life situations illustrating the primary laws of our nature, and to clothe them throughout "in a selection of language really used by men," at the same time giving them such a coloring of imagination that "ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect." The imagination, he affirmed, in a letter to Southey defending the poem of *Peter Bell*, does not require any supernatural agency, but "may be called forth as imperiously by incidents in the humblest departments of daily life." Simple scenes, truth to nature, simple diction, and imagination,—these were the fundamental articles of his creed. Adherence to this creed did not always result in good poetry. Sometimes, indeed, through a want of humor, Wordsworth wrote verse that in its bald simplicity is little short of ridiculous. And sometimes, no doubt, he succeeded best when he lost sight of his theories; for the Muse refuses to be tethered. But it is nevertheless true that he and his group succeeded in breaking down the old traditions and restoring poetry to its rightful heritage.

As for his own product, uneven though it proved, it contains not only many poems of genuine inspiration, but many of the very highest order; and to the present generation it is a

matter of less concern to know how far these were the fruit of his theories than to recognize their intrinsic poetic worth. There are the lines on *Tintern Abbey*, breathing the deep and holy peace that springs from a sense of the interpenetration of nature and spirit; there are the serene piety of the *Ode to Duty* and the lofty philosophy of *Laodamia*; the homely, moving pathos of *Michael* and *The Affliction of Margaret*; and the naïve but infinite suggestiveness of *We are Seven*; the subdued lyric rapture of *My Heart Leaps up when I Behold, She was a Phantom of Delight*, and *Daffodils* ("I wandered lonely as a cloud"); the haunting melody of *The Solitary Reaper*; the fusion of simplicity and passion in the poems upon *Lucy*; and the union of nearly all these things, together with an indescribable effluence of something besides, that marks as the crown of his work the magnificent *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*. To these separate poems should be added certain passages of *The Excursion* and *The Prelude*, wherein, meeting Milton on his own high ground, Wordsworth comes off with no unequal honor; and the best of the sonnets, such as "Earth has not anything to show more fair," or "The world is too much with us," or "Two voices are there," or "I thought of Thee," wherein again he need not bow down before his great exemplar.

"I thought of Thee, my partner and my guide,
 As being past away.—Vain sympathies !
 For, backward, Duddon ! as I cast my eyes,
 I sec what was, and is, and will abide;
 Still glides the Stream, and shall forever glide;
 The Form remains, the Function never dies;
 While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
 We Men, who in our morn of youth defied
 The elements, must vanish;—be it so !
 Enough, if something from our hands have power
 To live, and act, and serve the future hour;
 And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
 Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent
 dower,
 We feel that we are greater than we know."

It is not hard to see what it is that has always stood in the way of a popular acceptance of Wordsworth. Milton's three counts of "simple," "sensuous," and "passionate," may each, in a right interpretation of the terms, be affirmed of his poetry; yet there is about nearly all of it an austerity that is at first contact forbidding. Out of the struggle against despair which ensued upon the shattering of his early hopes and dreams,

Austerity. he came, victorious indeed, but with an inevitable loss
A medita- of enthusiasm. Reacting from the reaction of the
tive, exalted age, he was carried back toward conservatism. He
Muse. schooled himself in repression and self-control. "The

Gods approve," he writes in *Laodamia*, "the depth, and not the tumult, of the soul." Still a devotee of high ideals of liberty and the divinity of man, his passion flowed, not with noisy surface fretting, but tranquil, strong, and deep. These are qualities little inspiring to the vulgar or unphilosophic mind, and they make Wordsworth distinctly a poet for mature rather than youthful years. Moreover, the compass of his lyre is not great; his verse has a peculiar and somewhat monotonous character. It is neither dramatic nor epic; nor will the term lyric apply to any extensive portion of it, though including much of the very best. The great body of it is strictly reflective and didactic. It meditates and it teaches—not as the rigid, obvious moralizing of the eighteenth century verse teaches, but in its own exalted way. The exaltation is one of the distinguishing marks. Mr. Saintsbury dwells upon the fact that Wordsworth is peculiarly rich in "poetic moments"—flashes of thought or feeling revealed in such a sudden felicity of phrase that the poet in every imaginative man must instantaneously respond. Such are, to select only from *Tintern Abbey* and *The Solitary Reaper*—

"The sounding cataract
 Haunted me like a passion;"—

"The still, sad music of humanity;"—

"Old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago."

There are unquestionably more such poetic moments in Wordsworth, irradiating the shorter poems and relieving the dreariest wastes of the longer, than in all the eighteenth century poets combined.

But the supreme thing in Wordsworth is that which inspires alike his didactic and his exalted moods. The one abiding, permeating quality of his poetry is his religious sense of the part which Nature plays, or should play, in the spiritual life of man. Beyond all other poets before and since, he is Nature's high-priest.

*A Priest
of Nature.*

"To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran."

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

This is no mere contemplation of the externally picturesque, such as Thomson or Cowper knew; nor even the abundantly more spontaneous response of Burns to the mute appeals of earth and sky—for after all, Burns's real sympathy was called forth by man; it is such a sympathy with nature as no English poet had dreamed of. It is a conviction that nature is not a thing apart—"dead," as Lamb scoffingly phrased it—but an integral portion of human life, or, conversely, that human life is an integral portion of the surrounding world. One law knits all together, one spirit pervades all. And Wordsworth consecrated his genius to the endeavor to restore to men—as he heroically spent the years of his own abstinent life in restoring more completely to himself—the power of intimate communion with this other part of ourselves, in order that human life, so long self-blinded and crippled, might be once again made whole. He leads here into a region of mysticism where few will easily follow, and where all who fail will perhaps most wisely keep silent. But none will deny that Wordsworth has at least deep-

ened our reverence for a world whose boundaries he has pushed further into the infinite, and enabled us to reach, through re-quickened sympathies with all natural life, to exhaustless sources of delight and consolation. "Time," says Matthew Arnold, one of his truest disciples,

"may restore us in his course
Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force;
But where will Europe's latter hour
Again find Wordsworth's healing power?"

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was a nervous and somewhat erratic man who never achieved Wordsworth's early won self-mastery and into whose tempestuous life therefore never came Wordsworth's spiritual peace. He was born in Devonshire, the youngest of the thirteen children of the vicar of Ottery St. Mary, and was sent to school at Christ's Hospital, the "Blue Coat" charity school of London. He went to Cambridge in 1791, just as Wordsworth had completed his course there, but left without taking a degree. Always a dreamer, and listening just then to the hurtling echoes of the French Revolution within his own mind, he joined Robert Southey in a scheme to found a communistic colony—a "Pantisocracy," or government of all by all—on the banks of the Susquehanna, an American stream of which they knew little beyond the fact that it bore a beautiful, romantic name. It was after his marriage and the abandonment of this scheme that he made his acquaintance with Wordsworth, an acquaintance which bore fruit in the *Lyrical Ballads*. It is probable indeed that he, although the younger, was the prime mover of their joint poetic propaganda; none the less, the influence of each on the other was at the moment invaluable. Coleridge's share in the volume consisted of four poems, with the immortal *Ancient Mariner* in the place of honor. In this same year, 1797–1798, he composed, it seems, the first part of *Christabel, France: an Ode*, and *Kubla Khan* (a fragment of a remembered dream); while

*Samuel
Taylor
Coleridge,
1772–1834.*

Love, the second part of *Christabel*, and *Dejection: an Ode*, followed very rapidly.

The melancholy part of the story is that here, so far as great poetry is concerned, the catalogue ends. Of Coleridge's other poetic fragments, tragedies, etc., we need scarcely take account. He went with the Wordsworths to Germany, the home of Kant and transcendental philosophy, and immersed himself in metaphysics. He returned to England, fell a victim to opium, lost his powers of concentration, seldom finishing anything he undertook, and became dependent upon his friends, living for a time in the Lake country, but later mostly at London. In 1816, under the care of a physician with whom he lived at Highgate, his faculties were somewhat recuperated. He published the still unfinished *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan*, and he began to produce more prolifically again, this time chiefly philosophical and critical prose. The work was still characteristically fragmentary, as the titles show—*Biographia Literaria*, *Notes on Shakespeare*, etc. But he grappled with the highest speculative subjects, such as the nature of knowledge and the being of God; and in the lower field of criticism, as, for instance, in the notes on Shakespeare and the dramatists, in his discussion of Wordsworth's excellences, in his observations on art and nature, he gave utterance to dicta that in brilliance and depth remain unexcelled. For other distinction, he shone as a conversationalist—a monologist rather. On his favorite subjects he would talk for hours, and being one of the most omnivorous readers and best informed men that ever lived, the character of his talk may be inferred. Friends and disciples gathered to listen; and Carlyle has given a famous description of him, as, with his bodily infirmities and rapt, soaring intellect, he sat and talked, "on the brow of Highgate Hill," like some Olympian deity delivering laws and oracles to the mundane world. After this second period of activity his physical health steadily declined, down to his death in 1834. At the best, his work seemed never commensurate with the promise of his great powers. "To the



WILLIAM COWPER
WALTER SCOTT

ROBERT BURNS
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

man himself," said Carlyle, "Nature had given, in high measure, the seeds of a noble endowment; and to unfold it had been forbidden him." "Come back," cried Lamb, his old school-fellow, "come back into memory, like as thou wert in the day-spring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee—the dark pillar not yet turned—Samuel Taylor Coleridge—Logician, Metaphysician, Bard!"

The two things that directly concern us are the absolute qualities of Coleridge's poetry and the depth and extent of his personal and literary influence. His own deliberately chosen method of exciting poetic imagination and sympathy was very different from Wordsworth's. *A thorough Romanticist.* Immediate truth to nature he did not seek; on the contrary, he proposed to make use of supernatural or romantic situations and characters, trying at the same time to transfer to them "a human interest and a semblance of truth." Just here is the enormous gap that separates him from his friend. Romanticism, which seemed to be Wordsworth's only in a remote and derivative sense, was the very breath of Coleridge's being. As a poet and as a metaphysician, he was a dreamer, dwelling in a mist-world of his own. Wordsworth tried to assist in the composition of the *Ancient Mariner*, but gave it up: those seas were not for him to sail on. But Coleridge put forth fearless'y and brought back the golden freight we know—the strange tale of crime and expiation, of a mysterious voyage into spectral realms and a glad return to the world of natural and moral beauty.

"O Wedding-Guest ! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.

"O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company !—

"To walk together to the kirk,
 And all together pray,
 While each to his great Father bends,
 Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
 And youths and maidens gay!"

Poetry that could unseal the springs of wonder and reverence like this was a revelation, and is a revelation still. "The light that never was, on sea or land"—the words are Wordsworth's, but the thing is most eminently Coleridge's; and minuter characterization of his poetry needs scarcely to be made. Let us add mention only of the music with which his best poems are always vocal—the rush and roll of the odes, the intermittent peals and pauses of *Christabel*, the "symphony and song" of *Kubla Khan*, and the echoing chimes of *Youth and Age*:—

"Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
 Friendship is a sheltering tree;
 O! the joys, that came down shower-like,
 Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
 Ere I was old."

The influence that Coleridge has exercised is far wider than the fragmentary although splendid nature of his production would seem to promise. He talked, and the spreading waves of that "flood of utterance," as Carlyle described it, are spreading yet. He brought from Germany an imaginative idealistic philosophy, which, counter-acting the materialism of Locke and the rising utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill, gave a strong impetus to all that goes by the name of transcendentalism, an impetus that was transmitted to Carlyle, Emerson, and Ruskin. He sang, and, with Burns, set all poets to singing again. Mechanical couplets were immediately doomed; blank verse, even, should thenceforth be free as Shakespeare's or cadenced like Milton's. Iambs could be lightened at will.

*His
 Influence.*

"Bard Bracy ! bard Bracy ! your horses are fleet,
 Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,
 More loud than your horses' echoing feet !"

He was not the first to employ anapæsts; they had been used by poets from Prior to Burns, and especially by Cowper. But by combining anapæsts with iambs and trochees in the ever varying movement of *Christabel*, he restored the freedom of early English verse and virtually gave to poetry a new metre. The influence of this single incomplete but wonderful poem, whether in form or spirit, can be felt in the verse of almost every romantic poet since, from Scott and Keats, through Poe, Tennyson, Longfellow, Lowell, and even Arnold, to Rossetti and Swinburne. To such fruitfulness have the seeds of that noble endowment unfolded on happier soil.

With Wordsworth and Coleridge, Robert Southey made up the trio of the "Lake Poets." He has already been mentioned as having concocted with Coleridge, his brother-in-law, the "Pantisocratic" scheme. After much wandering he settled down at Keswick, in the Lake region, to the care of his family and Coleridge's, and to the cheerful pursuit—for such he found it—of literature. As to poetry, it proved little more than a pursuit. As early as 1796 he published the long blank verse poem of *Joan of Arc*, and he continued, with astonishing industry and fluency, to write various "epics" on romantic subjects, *The Curse of Kehama* (1810) being probably the best. Little of his poetry is read to-day, save a few minor pieces like the *Battle of Blenheim* and the *Cataract of Lodore*. The very correct prose to which he applied himself in later life—histories, biographies, etc.—is of more substantial merit. His *Life of Nelson* (1813) is a standard work. Southey was made Poet Laureate in 1813, and he at least adorned that office more than he was adorned by it, which could scarcely have been said of any predecessor since Dryden.

The credit for popularizing the romantic movement in poetry belongs mainly to Scott, who was precisely contemporaneous with these men, and whose *Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805) achieved a widespread fame that was never accorded to the *Lyrical Ballads*. But Scott, being primarily a prose ro-

Robert
Southey,
1774-1843.

mancer, and showing in verse approximately the same qualities that he showed in prose, will be treated later. For the moment

we must pass to another Scotch poet, Thomas Campbell, the son of a Glasgow merchant, who enjoyed an almost equal popularity. Campbell had published in 1799, when he was only twenty-one years old, *The Pleasures of Hope*, a poem which was well received, though it was quite in the old manner,—couplets, personification, didacticism and all. Then, changing completely with the sudden change in taste, he produced his much better work,—the scarcely excelled war-pieces of *Hohenlinden*, *The Battle of the Baltic*, and *Ye Mariners of England*, the ballads of *Lochiel* and *Lord Ullin's Daughter*, and the romantic narrative in Spenserian stanzas, *Gertrude of Wyoming* (1809), which took its scene and name from the valley of Wyoming on the Susquehanna. For these, and for a few lines like “ ’Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,” or

“ To live in hearts we leave behind
Is not to die,”

Campbell is still remembered.

Yet another poet who caught this romantic tide at its flood was the Irish minstrel, and friend of Byron, Thomas Moore.

Thomas Moore, 1779–1852. An amiable, witty, light-hearted social singing-bird, Moore poured out his songs in endless profusion for a public who paid liberally and demanded ever more—from the *Odes of Anacreon* in 1800, the *Irish Melodies* (“Go where glory waits thee,” “ ’Tis the last rose of summer,” etc.) beginning in 1807, and *Lalla Rookh* in 1817, down to *Odes upon Cash, Corn, and Catholics* in 1828. Literature, if this were literature, was indeed looking up commercially since the days of Johnson, seeing that Moore could obtain for the ten instalments of his melodies somewhat more than sixty thousand dollars. Such is the reward that music commands, while poetry often goes begging. Moore’s gift was almost wholly lyrical and sentimental, and, it must be added, by no means Irish,

or even Celtic. But it was always melodic. The singing measures, anapæsts in particular, he made himself easily master of. What in Cowper, twenty-five years earlier, was exceptional—"The poplars are felled; farewell to the shade"—becomes in his verse a prevailing movement:

"Long, long be my heart with such memories filled !
Like the vase in which roses have once been distilled—
You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will,
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still."

From the poets of the northern Lakes and the melodists of Scotland and Ireland, we turn to a slightly younger group in the south who constitute the other half of the great constellation of this age. The first of these was George *Lord Byron*, 1788-1824. Gordon Byron, whose meteoric career, in the second and third decades of the century, left such a lurid trail across the poetic heavens. Time and the successive shocks of other portents have stripped Byron's poetry of much of its sinister glamour, but the strangely attractive personality remains; and it is still possible to imagine the feelings of the British public when first the wild young lord drew upon himself their attention, and held it, at once terrified and fascinated, by a torrent of verses which protest, criticism, ridicule, even process of law, could not avail to stem. Such violence was little in keeping with English traditions, and indeed, once again, as in the time of Dryden and Pope, though with all the difference that lies between classicism and romanticism, England's literature was to exhibit a continental and cosmopolitan scope.

Byron was very traceably the creature of his inheritance and environment. He was born in London the year before the outbreak of the French Revolution. His father, a dissolute army captain, died three years later and left him to the care of a capricious, hot-tempered, over-indulgent mother. When he was ten years old the death of his grand-uncle, the "wicked" fifth Lord Byron, made him heir to the title and to what remained of the

A Revolutionary Spirit.

estate and family seat of Newstead Abbey. He was handsome, self-willed, sensitive, and proud, and he suffered physically, and still more mentally, from a deformed foot which prevented him from taking part in most athletic sports, though he excelled in riding and swimming. His schooling was obtained at Harrow and Cambridge. While at the latter place, and but nineteen years of age, he published a volume of very poor verses, *Hours of Idleness* (1807). The sharp attack upon this by the *Edinburgh Review*, a newly established organ of criticism, called forth a satirical response in his somewhat Popean *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809). In the meantime, having left Cambridge, he was leading a reckless life of dissipation at Newstead Abbey and at London, and then, coming of age, and having taken his seat in the House of Lords, he set out for a sojourn in the south of Europe which lasted two years.

The immediate fruits of this sojourn were the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, a partly autobiographic record of his travels, with meditations upon the romantic land of Spain, then suffering under the tyranny of Napoleon, and upon Greece, suffering likewise from the oppression of the Turk. The poem was composed in Spenserian stanzas, with an intentional tinge of archaism in the language. It was published in 1812, shortly after his return to England, and Byron "awoke one morning to find himself famous." The proud, picturesque, melancholy Childe was taken at once to the hearts of the people; Scott was neglected. Moore, Campbell, and Rogers befriended the new poet, and London society "suffocated him" in its drawing rooms. Under the stimulus of this success, within the next four years he published *The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Corsair*, *Lara*, *Hebrew Melodies*, *The Siege of Corinth*, and *Parisina*, mostly romances in the metres which Scott had already established in favor, supplanting however Scott's Highland chieftains and scenery with pirates and slaves and a wealth of Oriental coloring brought from his travels. Then came his unfortunate marriage with Miss Milbanke, a

separation, for whatever cause, and the consequent public execration of the poet; and in 1816 he sailed again for the continent, never, as the sequel proved, to return in life.

The eight years that followed were years of reckless wandering and feverish composition. The main events were his residence at Venice, his intimacy with the Countess Guiccioli at Ravenna, and his friendship with Shelley at Pisa. These were the years of nearly all his poetry of high merit—*The Prisoner of Chillon* (1816), *Beppo*, *Mazeppa*, the third and



THE CASTLE OF CHILLON.

fourth cantos of *Childe Harold* (1816, 1818), *Manfred*, *Sardanapalus*, *Cain*, and other dramas, the scathing, and in many eyes profane, political satire, *The Vision of Judgment*, and the sixteen cantos of the never completed *Don Juan* (1819–1824). Even this astonishing productiveness did not suffice to drain energies that are scarcely to be matched outside of the Elizabethan age. In the summer of 1823 he went from Genoa with a supply of arms, medicines, and money to aid the Greeks in their struggle for independence. Had a kinder fate permitted him to lead an army into the field, he would doubtless have

done it with the warlike fearlessness of his ancestors and a poet's passion for freedom. But it was not to be. He was stricken with fever at Missolonghi, where he died in April, 1824; and the boy Tennyson, who linked that generation so nearly to our own, dreaming at Somersby on poetic greatness, and, like all England, stunned by the news, crept away to weep and carve upon sandstone the words "Byron is dead."

That much of Byron's voluminous verse is poetry of the first order, or that most of it is poetry, in any true sense, few will maintain. He has abundant fire, force, passion, *Character of his Poetry.* splendor—a dozen striking qualities—but nearly always without the indefinable something that sanctifies and saves for all time. Very rarely—perhaps here and there in a song like *She Walks in Beauty*, or in *The Dream and Darkness*, two poems, however, which suffer because Byron was not a perfect master of blank verse—does he scale the heights of imagination or catch a glimpse of that "light that never was," "the consecration, and the Poet's dream," which visited the eyes of the four poets who stood by his side. This may be put in another way by saying that he is almost wholly of the earth, with nothing in him of the transcendental. Nor as a mere artist, except on the inferior plane of satire and burlesque, does he often show himself a forger of the perfectly felicitous phrase. He has descriptive passages of enticing beauty, pure and delicate, or warm and voluptuous, as more than one canto of *Don Juan* testifies.

"They were alone, but not alone as they
 Who shut in chambers think it loneliness;
 The silent ocean, and the starlight bay,
 The twilight glow, which momentarily grew less,
 The voiceless sands, and dropping caves, that lay
 Around them, made them to each other press,
 As if there were no life beneath the sky
 Save theirs, and that their life could never die."
 (Canto II., st. clxxxviii.)

None who have fallen, at the right time of life, under the spell of such passages as this, or such as "Ave Maria! blessed be the hour" will ever recant from their allegiance to the poet that was in Byron. And on certain obviously poetic themes, such as freedom, the ruins of time, the sublime aspects of nature, the transitoriness of human glory, he rises again and again into magnificent declamation.

"Yet, Freedom ! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
Streams like the thunderstorm *against* the wind "

"The Niobe of nations ! there she stands,
Childless and crownless in her voiceless woe."

"Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud !"

These lines show that Byron appeals to a more exalted, if not always to a healthier, imagination than does Scott. Yet in even these unforgettable passages of *Childe Harold*, in the impetuous narrative rush of *Mazeppa*, in the lyric fervor of *The Isles of Greece*, in the phantasmagorial limnings of *Darkness* itself, there is an unmistakable note of the rhetorical, as distinct from the true sublime. It is magnificent and one is fascinated by it—awed almost into silence—yet one feels that it is not supremely great. Moreover Byron was a fluent, reckless versifier, forcing or following rhymes as he pleased, and turning off his stanzas by reams. The abuse of license, the defects of style and finish, the cynical bathos, that make so much of his verse not poetry at all, will often creep, or even be defiantly thrust, into a beautiful or lofty passage, and there comes the sudden drop, the irrecoverable loss of *rapport*, that chills the most generous admiration.

Such are the strictures which sober criticism is bound to make. Even then, the merits that have already been conceded are so many and of such compelling power that, were there

nothing more, they would give Byron high poetic rank. But something still more vital than the qualities of his poetry is to

be found in the personality of the man. Rarely has a man put himself so unreservedly into his work.

His Personality, Sincerity, and Strength.

"Yet must I think less wildly: I *have* thought
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame;
And thus, untaught in youth my heart to tame,
My springs of life were poison'd. 'Tis too late!
Yet am I changed; though still enough the same
In strength to bear what time cannot abate,
And feed on bitter fruits without accusing Fate."

"I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me; and to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture; I can see
Nothing to loathe in Nature, save to be
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
Class'd among creatures, when the soul can flee,
And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain
Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain."

(*Childe Harold*, III., vii., lxxii.)

Byron felt intensely, and he always wrote just what he felt. The result is an absolutely faithful transcript of a vigorous, picturesque personality, silhouetted sharp against the neutral colors of Georgian British society. It was as if a volcano had been upheaved in the valley of the Thames, filled with dangerous explosive forces. The poet, with his pride and his passions, found himself at hopeless odds with the decency and conformity about him, and he revenged himself by attacking the hypocrisy that only too often lay beneath. His *Don Juan*, with its libertine, pagan hero, is one long mocking satire that outraged, as it was meant to do, all the better feelings of conservative England. Society had ostracised him, and he pilloried society; and he never did better work than when he threw his soul into this congenial task. The spectacle is not edifying, but the brilliance

of the feat and the genius of the agent are not to be discounted. "Colossal egotism" is often charged against him, and he did indeed thinly mask himself beneath all his heroes. He made an inordinate and unheroic outcry over his own miseries, like an over-sensitive boy, fancying himself a being by nature set apart and by men misunderstood and maligned. "What helps it now," asks Matthew Arnold,

"that Byron bore,
With haughty scorn that mock'd the smart,
Through Europe to the Ætolian shore
The pageant of his bleeding heart?"

But just because he had this huge self-pity, and played upon and pleaded it, his poetry is what it is. Poetry may have higher missions than to voice a sorrow or to impale a wrong, yet to do these fearlessly and effectually is one kind of greatness. Besides, destructive forces have their uses. The lightning illuminates, though it blasts where it strikes. The illumination may save from an abyss; the very blasting may prepare for a sturdier growth. It was better that England should have her Byron than a French Revolution; and though it is too much to say that the one saved her from the other, the pertinence of the illustration is not impaired.

Historically, then, rather than as an actual, present influence, Byron holds his position. He was of his place and time, mirroring in himself the world that was, with no hour wasted in Utopian dreams. He lived amid concrete realities, and died fighting for no poetic *Libertas*, but for a political fact. On the continent of Europe, indeed, his potency is not yet past. He was, as has been intimated, more European than British. The revolutionists of the continent, the men with swords in their hands, welcomed him to their side. He was the living voice of their hatreds and their desires. The poets flocked to his standard—in France, Spain, Italy, Russia, Poland. Next to Shakespeare, and perhaps more vitally than Shakespeare, he is still

for these nations the great English poet. In "the holy alliance of poetry with the cause of the people," said Mazzini, "he led the genius of Britain on a pilgrimage through Europe;" and through Heine, Leopardi, Hugo, de Musset, and their romantic successors, the pilgrimage goes on.

The name of Percy Bysshe Shelley is sometimes linked with that of Byron as another poet of social revolt, since he likewise carried his revolutionary doctrines into fields but vaguely dreamed of in the milder, æsthetic apostasy of Coleridge and Wordsworth. But there all likeness between the two ends. Byron, unlike any other great poets of the time, was an uncompromising realist. Shelley, not unlike others, but in a manner so far beyond them that the name seems to apply to him alone, was an idealist. Byron continued to the bitter end in the storm and stress of life, Wordsworth found a refuge in communion with Nature, Coleridge wrapped himself in the mists of metaphysical speculation, while Shelley was forever "on tiptoe for a flight" to the radiant heaven of his dreams.

In Shelley's life, however, was no lack of storm and stress. He came of a good Sussex family and was the prospective heir to a title; but he seems to have inherited nothing from his most unpoetical parents unless it were his mother's beauty. At Eton, where he was sent to school, his disposition to rebel against petty tyranny, his sensitiveness, his solitary habits, and his enthusiasms, won for him the name of "mad Shelley." At Oxford he divided his time among poetry, philosophy, and experimental chemistry and physics, until, under the influence of the radical ideas set afloat by such books as Godwin's *Political Justice*, he published a tract on *The Necessity of Atheism* and was promptly expelled; nor would his father receive him at home. Then, although but nineteen years of age, he married Harriet Westbrook, who was herself a mere schoolgirl. The marriage was apparently somewhat against his inclination, and certainly against his theory that true love should be the only

bond of wedlock. After their separation the unfortunate Harriet drowned herself, and Shelley was refused by law the custody of their two children. Meanwhile he had wandered, with Harriet at first, over the picturesque portions of northern and western England and Wales, crossing several times to Ireland, where he distributed, to little purpose, one of his well-meant socialistic tracts. After Harriet's death, in 1816, he married Mary Wollstonecraft, the daughter of Godwin, with whom he had already eloped to the continent. In the same year he followed Byron to Italy, like him leaving England never to return. In Italy his happiness was clouded by the loss of two of the children of his second marriage, the third only surviving him. In the summer of 1822, with two friends, Trelawny and Williams, he took a summer house on the Gulf of Spezia and procured the pleasure-boat which brought him and Williams their death. After sailing from Leghorn, whither they had gone to meet Leigh Hunt, the boat was never seen again. Shelley's body, washed ashore with volumes of Sophocles and Keats in the pockets of the coat, was burned on the beach in the presence of Trelawny, Byron, and Hunt, and the ashes were sent to Rome to lie in the Protestant cemetery by the body of his son, and not far from that of Keats.

Generous and enthusiastic dreamer that he was, Shelley spent much of his life in attempts to relieve the oppressed

Personality and Work. and to inspire men with his own lofty ideas of religion and of political and social right. Dying,

however, before he was thirty, he had scarcely time to outgrow the mistakes of his juvenile ardor, and the natural results of his defiance of authority and convention are seen in some of the disasters that attended his brief career. But he never grew cynical, like Byron. He did not allow his personal sufferings to embitter him against his kind, even when men refused most obstinately to see that a passionate love for them was his guiding motive. The love triumphed over hate; and when practical measures failed, the poet in him found relief in

song. We need not stop to consider his youthful romances nor the "philosophical poem" of *Queen Mab* (1813). In *Alastor* (1816) he first set forth in the plenitude of poetic glory the unattainable ideal of human perfection that haunted his dreams. Alastor, the spirit of solitude, is made to pursue, through the wilds of nature and the ruins of man, into far caverns of the East, the "veiled maid," only to resign to death at last his soul and his "wondrous frame"—

"A fragile lute, on whose harmonious strings
The breath of heaven did wander."

The Revolt of Islam (*Laon and Cythna*, 1818), a long poem in Spenserian stanzas, conveys in a kind of romance the poet's ideals of the social millenium that would follow upon the establishment of universal principles of justice and love. Again, in the lyrical drama of *Prometheus Unbound* (1820), is given a vision of humanity redeemed through the efforts of a godlike saviour.

"Love, from its awful throne of patient power
In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour
Of dread endurance, from the slippery, steep,
And narrow verge of crag-like agony, springs
And folds over the world its healing wings. . . .

"To defy Power which seems omnipotent;
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great, and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory!"

These, with the more earthly tragedy of *The Cenci* (1819), and another lyrical drama, *Hellas* (1822), comprise his most important long poems. Among the briefer ones are the fantasies of *The Witch of Atlas* and *Epipsychidion* (1821), and the elegy upon the death of Keats, *Adonais* (1821), a poem that stands by the side of Milton's *Lycidas*. In addition, there is a large

number of short lyrics, including among them not only his best known poems but some of the most perfect productions of the kind in the language.

If, in judging this poetry, we put entirely aside its somewhat vague and never realized messianic purpose, we see at once that it possesses, from first to last, that supremely poetic quality for which in Byron we so often seek in vain. Always beyond definition or analysis, this quality is nowhere more so than in Shelley, and the vocabulary of the empyrean—"radiant," "iridescent," "ethereal," "celestial," "angelical"—has been exhausted in the endeavor to describe his work. Less elusive, however, than the tenuous substance of his poetry, or its dissolving cloud-and-light-imagery, is its wonderful harmony of sound, and by virtue of this it has found an audience both fit and not hopelessly few. It is this, largely, that lifts the choruses of his *Prometheus Unbound* and *Hellas* above the level of the dramas themselves, and sets his songs and odes—*The Cloud*, *To a Skylark*, *Ode to the West Wind*, *To Naples*, *To Liberty*—apart among English poems, the peers of the richest harmonies of the ancient Lesbian and Sicilian lyres.

"I am the daughter of Earth and Water,
 And the nursling of the sky;
 I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
 I change, but I cannot die.
 For after the rain, when with never a stain
 The pavilion of heaven is bare,
 And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams
 Build up the blue dome of the air,
 I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
 And out of the caverns of rain,
 Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
 I arise and unbuild it again."

(*The Cloud*.)

Shelley did not find his audience at once. He did not live, like Wordsworth, to create it, and he had to be content with the

appreciation of a few kindred spirits. His music only, we have said, could reach the general ear, and even this, holding, as it does, "like woven sounds of streams and breezes, the inmost sense suspended in its web," can never be a universal passport. But after his death and Byron's, Byron's dominion over the British public steadily waned, while Shelley's little light as steadily brightened to a star of the first magnitude. Time is making a juster discrimination, and now we behold them, equal stars in that great constellation, the one still shining with a baleful light, the other with a softer effulgence.

Of the five poets of this period whom we are now accustomed to name in one breath, John Keats was the latest born and the first to die. In fact, if we take them in the order of *John Keats, 1795-1821.* birth, as has been done here—Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Keats—we may observe that it is the inverse order of their deaths, the life of each being wholly comprised within that of his predecessor. The shrinking proceeds at a startling pace. Briefer even than Shelley's brief life, the years of Keats were fewer than a third of Wordsworth's, and his total period of productiveness less than one-tenth. He died too with no assurance, not even self-assurance, of fame. He had passed, like any casual songster, beneath the critical eyes of the two elders, with no premonition on the part of either that his seat would be with theirs in the end.

His birth was humble. He was the son of a London stable-keeper, orphaned early, with little more than sufficient means for some irregular schooling, and soon put into the distasteful position of a surgeon's apprentice. His figure was unprepossessing—he was dwarfish, with short legs, disproportionately long arms and broad shoulders, and a heavy jaw; fighting was one of his earliest accomplishments. Except, however, in the overwhelming misfortune of his swift decline in health, it would be idle to contrast his worldly advantages unfavorably with Byron's and Shelley's. He had compensations. Even his features, with the large bright eyes and curling hair, were not unbeautiful.



LORD BYRON
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

JOHN KEATS
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

And he had the good fortune to fall in with friends—Charles Cowden Clarke and Leigh Hunt especially—who opened to him inspiring visions of “western islands” and “the realms of gold.” This was when he was between fifteen and twenty. The rest of his brief story is only first the joy of life and love and poetry, and then the bitterness of seeing life, love, and poetry go down together, apparently into one grave of hopeless extinction. First we see him “ramping” through the *Faërie Queene*, the *Æneid*, the Classical Dictionary, and kindred sources of poetic delight, and trying his own hand in verses on all sorts of subjects; roaming meanwhile over England, from Margate, Devon, and the Isle of Wight, to the Lake Country and the land of Burns. “I find,” he wrote in these months of enthusiasm, “that I cannot exist without Poetry—without eternal Poetry. . . . I began with a little, but habit has made me a Leviathan.” Then, following close upon the publication of his first volumes, which were so scornfully treated by the reviewers, came his consuming passion for Fanny Brawne, to be followed in turn by the sudden arrest which consumption brought to all his hopes and plans. Though in the heyday of life in 1818, with overflowing animal spirits and boundless poetic dreams, we find him in the autumn of 1820 taking a last farewell of England, poetry, and love in the most pathetic sonnet in literature, “Bright star! would I were steadfast as thou art.”

He died at Rome in February, 1821, and was buried there in the Protestant cemetery, with his own despairing words carved upon his tombstone: “Here lies one whose name was writ in water.”



KEATS'S GRAVE.

Shelley, under the mistaken impression that he had been virtually killed by the reviewers—whose attacks could cause little more than a passing irritation to one of Keats's mental strength and sanity—began at once, with his magnanimous *Adonais*, to reverse the verdict of the epitaph, until half a century later Rossetti could truthfully say of that name that it is

"not writ

But rumored in water, while the fame of it
Along Time's flood goes echoing evermore."

Keats published three volumes in all—*Poems* in 1817, *Endymion* (somewhat ominously inscribed "to the memory of Thomas Chatterton") in 1818, and *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and Other Poems* in 1820. In these four years his work was done. No close student of it can fail to be impressed by the astonishing progress, the rapid maturing of the poet's powers, which it exhibits. Aside from the perfection of the imaginative sonnet of discovery, *On first Looking into Chapman's Homer*, the early volume contains almost nothing that is not decidedly juvenile. *Endymion* (in which students of form may study the romantic as opposed to the classic couplet) stands midway between juvenility and maturity. It gives assurance of the power of sustained flight, and it reveals an opulence of poetic resources that is actually dazzling—a "bare circumstance" expanded into four thousand lines, and every line, in the words in which Keats declared his intention, "filled with poetry." But its lavish use of ornament is the defect that shows its juvenility; it surfeits with sweets. Now in a tangle of flowers and bowers, now in a kaleidoscopic whirl of classical allusions, the story quite loses itself, and it is possible to find a little excuse for the criticism that advised the poet to go back to his "plasters, pills, and ointment-boxes." But though *Endymion* is not a good poem, it is everywhere admirable poetry, and it is, moreover, not an unfitting base upon which to have reared that monumental first line,

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

But it is in the third volume, together with several posthumous pieces, that we find the great Keats, whether it be in the Miltonic majesty of *Hyperion*, the Greek purity and brightness of *Lamia*, the Italian softness of the plaintive *Isabella*, the mediæval witchery of the *Eve of St. Agnes*, the classic finish, the depth of melody, and the concentration of passion in the two great *Odes*, or the essence of all life and romance in *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*. In the *Eve of St. Agnes*, for instance, we have the romantic lavishness brought just within bounds, charging the poem with color and sound and yielding line after line that almost pain the sense with beauty—

“The music, yearning like a God in pain,”—

“And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,”—

“Ethereal, flush’d, and like a throbbing star,”—

yet remaining subordinate always to the story, through which we are carried with unwavering interest and sympathy to the close. In the *Ode to a Nightingale* we get a deeper note of personal passion, in the *Ode on a Grecian Urn* a more chiselled, stately perfection of controlled art, and in both the same exquisite melody and imagery and the same absolute felicity of line and phrase.

“Darkling I listen; and, for many a time

I have been half in love with easeful Death,

Call’d him soft names in many a mused rhyme,

To take into the air my quiet breath;

Now more than ever seems it rich to die,

To cease upon the midnight with no pain,

While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad

In such an ecstasy !

Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—

To thy high requiem become a sod.”

Keats’s happy hours were all spent in fostering his love of beauty, and his whole mission and message was to instil into others the same love. Not often does he attempt to teach directly, but better than any amount of analysis or moralizing

are the poems themselves. What succeeding poets owe to him—for more than any of the others, even Shelley or Coleridge, Keats is the progenitor of the later romantic and æsthetic poets—might possibly be estimated with some approach to exactness; but what the world of readers owes to him, whom they know so much better than the others, admits of no calculation. Nor is it of any use to conjecture what more he might have accomplished with a happier fate. What he accomplished without it is sufficient, not perhaps to satisfy our importunate thirst, but sufficient for his own undying fame.

The fiction of this period, through the character of the work of Scott, its greatest creative writer, is a part of the story of the Romantic triumph. There were, however, several novelists—mainly women, as it happens—who were not furtherers of the movement, but rather foils or reactionaries. One, Miss Burney, has been mentioned before, since she did her best work in the preceding generation. Another was Maria Edgeworth, whose close delineations of Irish life and landlordism, especially her *Castle Rackrent* (1800), together with certain tales for children, had a long-lasting popularity. But the most important was Jane Austen, the daughter of a Hampshire rector, who moved unobtrusively in the country squire rank of English society, and, for a long time unknown to fame, wrought her observations into a series of delightfully and absolutely realistic novels which will bear comparison with those of Fielding or Thackeray. She began her writing in her twenty-first year, but found no publisher until 1811, when she put forth *Sense and Sensibility*, to be rapidly followed by *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey*, and *Persuasion*.

Miss Austen's virtues are of the least obvious kind. Nothing is drawn on a large or striking scale. The very life she portrays—often as homely as that of Crabbe's poems, in which she delighted, always decidedly feminine and provincially British—

is as narrow and circumscribed as can well be imagined. But it is life, and that is the essential thing. By endless minute touches, given almost wholly in the dramatic form of conversation at the everyday level, she presents living characters, and not merely photographs of external feature and circumstance. Moreover, her own sense of humor and irony plays about her creations, giving that impression of amused observation and artistic detachment which marks great creators like Shakespeare, Balzac, or Thackeray, and which serves to stamp her work as human comedy of a very high order.

In just one particular did Miss Austen's work have any connection with the Romantic movement: she began by satirizing that movement, and *Northanger Abbey* is partly a burlesque upon the fantastic incredibilities of such tales as *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. But prose romance, in a new and saner guise than that of Mrs. Radcliffe, was to find at last a vindicator in one who at the same time did not refuse his admiration to the sane and wholesome realism of both Miss Edgeworth and Miss Austen.

Walter Scott was a native of Edinburgh, and perhaps the greatest son of that northern capital. His early life, spent in wandering over the country as a sportsman, in mingling with society of every grade, and in indifferent preparation, partly at the University of Edinburgh, for the paternal vocation of the law, gave no special promise of a literary career. But he was a voracious reader, and he steeped himself in the romance of history and Scottish legend. He revelled, too, in the new German romantic poetry—itsself deeply affected by Bishop Percy's revival of the English ballads—and some of it he translated, notably Bürger's *Lenore* under the title of *William and Helen* (1796). After forming a secret partnership with the Ballantyne brothers in the printing business, he prepared a collection of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, which they published in 1802–1803. Then he struck into the vein of original metrical romances which made him

Sir Walter
Scott,
1771–1832.

famous. The first was the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805), a tale of the Border in the sixteenth century, for which he employed the metre of Coleridge's unpublished *Christabel*, portions of which he had heard recited. Thousands of copies of the poem were sold; everybody was soon familiar with

"The way was long, the wind was cold,
The minstrel was infirm and old,"

and the tide of public taste was turned at once to the new poetry. Naturally Scott followed up the demand which he had created, producing in the next few years *Marmion* (1808), *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), and other metrical romances, until the rising star of Byron began to dim the light of his own and he turned his efforts to prose.

Nowadays there are those who would almost deny to these poems the name of poetry, saying that their popularity and influence are chiefly with a class of readers who accept them for anything or everything but absolutely poetic qualities—that what chiefly holds their attention is the story, assisted by the short-line, marching measures which any one can catch the rhythm of, and which Scott had such a ready knack of composing. But to tell a story well requires both imagination and art, and when to these are added facility in metre and rhyme, we have a number of legitimate poetic elements; nor is it certain that we always think of more than these when we praise great narrative poems, whether of Chaucer or Dryden. Doubtless Scott had little of the divine afflatus, the passion and vision of the anointed poet; nevertheless, our definition of poetry must be kept broad enough to include such things as the inspiring, even though declamatory, "Boat Song," the tender "Ave Maria," and the stirring "Battle of Beal' an Duine" in the *Lady of the Lake*, or the majestic narrative of Flodden Field with which *Marmion* closes. Scott was not Coleridge; but there is an order of ballad poetry that grips the senses as well as one that awes the soul.

It was in 1814 that Scott, who had meanwhile settled himself in the estate of Abbotsford on the Tweed, near the ancient ruin of Melrose Abbey, published, anonymously, his first prose romance, or novel, *Waverley*. Though the authorship was quite unsuspected, the success of the venture was as widespread and remarkable as his former success in verse, and he thenceforth continued to produce stories "by the author of *Waverley*," often at the rate of two in one year, until in fourteen years he



SIR WALTER SCOTT'S STUDY AT ABBOTSFORD.

had published twenty-three long novels, besides some shorter tales. He kept his literary secret almost to the end, and we have presented to us the unusual spectacle of a famous man suddenly withdrawing behind a veil of anonymity to enjoy from that seclusion a second and different fame. He attained also to other public eminence. As a reward for his staunch Toryism he was the first baronet whom George IV. created on his succes-

sion to the throne. He might well have enjoyed yet many years of happiness in spite of the tremendous strain of work which he had persisted in inflicting upon himself. But his extravagant passion for land-owning and castle-building, and the failure of his publishing partners, left him suddenly bankrupt at the age of fifty-five; thenceforward there was nothing for him but a heroic continuance of his literary labors to save his credit and name. This he succeeded in doing, but in six years more, a few months after the death of Goethe, utterly worn out, he died; and Macaulay, the young member of Parliament, remarked parenthetically in a letter to his sister, "Poor Scott is gone; and I cannot be sorry for it."

Scott's novels might be classified in several ways—into those, like *Ivanhoe* and *Quentin Durward*, that are the especial delight of youthful readers, and those, like *Old Mortality*, *Guy Mannering*, and *The Heart of Midlothian*, that win the heartier approval of the older and more critical; or into those that represent historical scenes and events, like the first three just named, and those that picture life and manners with more imaginative freedom; or again into those whose scenes are laid outside of Scotland, as *Ivanhoe*, *Kenilworth*, and *Woodstock* in England, *Quentin Durward* on the continent, and *The Talisman* in Palestine—a class, Ruskin holds, "continually weak in fancy and false in prejudice"—and those "literally Scotch novels" which the same worshipper of Scott regards as faultless, *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *Old Mortality*, *The Heart of Midlothian*. But classification matters little. It is more to the purpose to explain why they should be given the name of novels at all. The term, indeed, is not quite accurate; "historical novels," though not all-inclusive, would be better. For Scott is virtually the creator of historical fiction. There had been histories, romances, and novels. What Scott did was to make these three meet on the common ground of romance. He made no pretense to entire historical truth nor to minute antiquarian accuracy. But by

keeping within historical probability he avoided the ridiculous extravagances of the pure romancers, finding still, in the remote and the past, and through cunningly invented plots, the atmosphere and glamour of romance. Then by adopting real scenes as his backgrounds, especially that natural scenery which does not change, and which can therefore always be copied accurately, he produced the illusion of reality. Finally, through the employment of real personages, or through created characters acting for the most part from normal motives and impulses, he secured also the human interest which gave to the realists, the writers of the novel proper, their peculiar power.

It is a great accomplishment, and only two faults of consequence can be cited in diminution of it. Scott's characters, especially his women, are not remarkable for accurate or subtle drawing, and his style is loose. It was to be expected, perhaps, in composite work like his, with its fundamentally romantic aim, that certain characters should be merely conventional, and that others should be romantically overdrawn and ideal. Yet not a few escape these strictures. Dandie Dinmont, for instance, the Border yeoman of *Guy Mannering*, Dominie Sampson, the eccentric schoolmaster, even the mad gipsy, Meg Merrilies, perhaps even the proud Highland chief in *Waverley*, Fergus MacIvor, with his sister Flora, have genuine lifelikeness. Assuredly, too, Jeanie Deans, the dairy-woman of *The Heart of Midlothian*, is, in her own rank, as admirable a character as any of Thackeray's, for there are times when simplicity counts for more than subtlety, and the master of broad strokes secures the strongest effect. Of Scotch character, at least in the humbler walks of life, both in its humorous and pathetic aspects, Scott was a most competent delineator. Again, if the style of his headlong composition does not measure up to the standards set by close criticism, we remember the purpose it was meant to serve. It has those things which are all-important in narrative—life, movement, and graphic power—and it might have lost something of these in a search for finer qualities.

In fact, the large scale on which Scott works is one of the most impressive things about him—a scale so large that it would be hopeless to attempt, by any citations, to illustrate his powers. The novels must be read in their entirety if one would gain any conception of their great qualities—the seldom flagging ardor of creation, the endlessly diverting panorama of color and action, the gorgeous rehabilitation of the scenes of the past. So impressive are they that their influence has been communicated to history itself, and nearly all historical writing since Scott's time has borne the signet of Waverley. Upon life, too, have the novels left their mark, seeing that Scott put into his works, objective though they are, his own attributes—his courage, his loyalty, his chivalrous sense of honor, his overflowing good cheer. Admiration of chivalry and feudalism has in it at least this much of good for an uncompromisingly practical and democratic age. For while the romantic spirit has often seemed to send its disciples on far and fruitless quests, it has seldom failed, by impulsively laying bare their inmost selves, to bring them nearer to us as personalities than the votaries of a colder, classical art could hope to get. We may or may not praise Scott, Tennyson, Ruskin, Morris, Stevenson, as impeccable artists; we must recognize that their nobility of character, and their ideals, as revealed in their creations, are among the strongest sources of inspiration to the race.

CHAPTER XVII

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY—THE NEW PROSE 1800-1840

THE REVIEWERS LAMB DE QUINCEY LANDOR MACAULAY

As if by an impulse from the very setting forward of the calendar, the nineteenth century brought a change of front all along the line, manifest even in the less creative forms of prose. Not that there was great abruptness in the change: Burke makes easy the transition from Johnson, Goldsmith, and Gibbon, to Lamb, De Quincey, and Macaulay. But the eighteenth century, with all its array of philosophy, history, and criticism, had nothing just like the multi-colored miscellaneous prose—extending from philosophy and history to the ebullient expression of mere personal opinion and fancy—of the nineteenth. To fix upon any definite character in this new prose is impossible, for the very essence of its newness is to be found in its flexibility and variety—its resumption of all the virtues it had at different times possessed and their free combination and extension. Modern orderly prose began, we have seen, with Cowley and Dryden, and continued, with here and there added grace or stateliness, through the eighteenth century. The new prose remains for the most part orderly, always an easy vehicle for immediate communication, but at the same time it resumes, at pleasure or need, the passion, the rhythm, the rhetoric, even the crotchets and conceits, of its palmiest Elizabethan or Caroline days. And so we find in one writer the clearest of straightforward utterance, in another a classical finish and repose, in another romantic flights of imagination and rhetoric, and in yet another the wildest play of fantasy and whim.

A not very promising beginning of this is to be seen perhaps in the founding in 1802, by the Whigs Francis Jeffrey and Sydney Smith, of the *Edinburgh Review*, one of the earliest as it is now

the oldest of modern reviews, and a forerunner of the popular present-day periodicals. It was followed after seven years by a Tory opponent, the *Quarterly*, and in 1817 by *Blackwood's Magazine*, also Tory, with which *The Reviewers.* John Wilson ("Christopher North") and Lockhart, the son-in-law and biographer of Scott, became connected. The reviews were meant to serve literature, and incidentally politics. Their attitude toward the former was a combination of conservatism in standards and opinions with the most radical freedom of expression. They cultivated a "slashing" style of criticism, and the special objects of their attacks were the rising Romantic and "Cockney" poets. It will be remembered how they ran afoul of Byron and Keats; and it was Jeffrey who made the famous declaration about Wordsworth's *Excursion*,—"This will never do!" They assisted, in time, in the development of some excellent writers after their conservative standards, notably Macaulay. But enduring literature was rather better served by another journal, which was miscellaneous in character and more liberal in policy—the brilliant but short-lived *London Magazine* (1820–1825), which had the good fortune to foster the genius of both Lamb and De Quincey. Of these writers in particular there is much more to say. But mention should be made in passing of at least two other active journalists of the time, Leigh Hunt (1784–1859), the friend of Keats, a poet as well as a delightful critic and essayist, and William Hazlitt (1778–1830), a still more admirable critic, both of whom contributed enormously toward fortifying the romanticists impregably in their position.* The prose of Southey has been

*Consider the significance of these words from Hazlitt's *Lectures on the English Poets*:

"Poetry is in all its shapes the language of the imagination and the passions, of fancy and will. Nothing, therefore, can be more absurd than the outcry which has been sometimes raised by frigid and pedantic critics for reducing the language of poetry to the standard of common sense and reason. . . . Let who will strip nature of the colors and the shapes of fancy, the poet is bound not to do so; the impressions of common sense and strong imagination, that is, of passion and indifference, cannot be the same, and they must have a separate language to do justice to either."

spoken of elsewhere, and likewise that of Coleridge and Wordsworth, all of which takes place in the very large aggregate of the period. Even Scott did good miscellaneous work, and was one of the earliest contributors to the *Edinburgh Review*.

Of all the group the one whose work seems most secure against the ravages of time strayed into his heritage by what

looks like only a
Charles happy chance.
Lamb,

1775-1834. Charles Lamb, the

son of a lawyer's clerk, a Blue Coat boy with Coleridge at Christ's Hospital, and to the end of his days a most loyal Londoner, has been the object of more mingled pity, love, and praise, than often falls to one human being. He saw his mother stabbed to death by his sister Mary in a fit of insanity, and he consciously lived all his life under a threatening cloud of the same malady, at the same time unselfishly devoting himself to the care of Mary, who outlived him. Until he was fifty

years of age he was an accountant, first at the South Sea House and then with the East India Company, spending his mornings, as he quaintly expressed it, driving his quill along "the cart-rucks of figures and ciphers," and his leisure hours lounging about the bookstalls and printshops or at home reading with Mary his beloved old Folios, and then writing with the "enfranchised quill that frisks and curvets so at ease over the flowery carpet-ground of a midnight dissertation." In this way he produced much literary work



GRAVE OF CHARLES AND
 MARY LAMB.

of varying value,—a youthful romance, several plays, poems,* epigrams, newspaper trifles, and the like. Of this miscellaneous work, the best known is the *Tales from Shakespeare* (1807), which he prepared with the assistance of his sister, and the best is his *Specimens of the English Dramatic Poets* (1808), specimens selected with rare judgment and annotated in a sympathetic and luminous manner. But if Lamb had died at forty-five, he would be merely one of that innumerable army of hack-writers whose names are little known outside of literary histories. In 1820 the newly founded *London Magazine* asked him for a contribution, and he wrote his *Recollections of the South Sea House*, the first of those random essays, just as many as there are weeks in a year, which we know now as the *Essays of Elia* (1823; second series, 1833). Upon these rests his undiminishing fame.

It is the personality of Lamb that gives them their richest flavor. The essays are largely the confessions and confidences of an ego, but of the most innocently whimsical and altogether delightful ego that ever took the world into his confidence. “I am in love with this green earth,” he exclaims; “sun, and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks, and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields, and the delicious juices of meats and fishes, and society, and the cheerful glass, and candle-light, and fireside conversations, and innocent vanities, and jests, and *irony itself*—do these things go out with life?” One cannot resist the infection of a spirit that looks out upon life in this wise, childlike way,—for there is wisdom, in abundance, as well as innocence and whim. We call Lamb quaint; and it is indeed odd to find this sort of thing between the covers of a book. His favorite reading was in the “quaint” Caroline writers of a century and a half before, especially Thomas Fuller; and he sows his own pages as freely as they with conceits, pedantries, jests, ironies,

* Among the poems written by men who would not have called themselves poets, Lamb's *The Old Familiar Faces* must be given very high rank.

and puns. In one mood he gives us a merry medley upon *All Fool's Day* or a mock-learned *Dissertation upon Roast Pig*, in another a delightful bit of portraiture and reminiscence like *Old China*, in another such a beautiful improvisation as *The Child Angel* or such a profoundly pathetic one as *Dream-Children; a Reverie*. From one point of view, it all seems like the very sublimation of gossip, small talk elevated to the dignity of literature; but from another it is seen to be really fine thoughts, in negligée,—a shrewd philosophy wearing an antic face. Take, for a single instance, his odd division of the human species into “the men who borrow and the men who lend,” beneath which there is assuredly a very subtle and grave truth.

But Lamb must be read with large allowances. A professed jester and a frank egoist, a man of “imperfect sympathies,” loving Quaker ways, for instance, but scarcely Quakers, ridiculing “dead nature” but loitering for hours in old-fashioned gardens, laughing at Scotchmen, prejudiced against Jews—how, it may well be asked, is one to take him? We must read always by a kind of divination, both to know what he means and whether he means it. If the sources of his charm were not so endless, one would be tempted to say they lie chiefly in his feminine sensitiveness to elusive distinctions and the ever surprising novelty of his point of view. Note his definition of the Poor Relation—“the most irrelevant thing in nature,” “an odious approximation,” whose rap at your door is “between familiarity and respect.” Or read his description of himself when his employers pensioned him and the long drudgery of the counting-house became a thing of the past:

“For the first day or two I felt stunned—overwhelmed. I could only apprehend my felicity; I was too confused to taste it sincerely. I wandered about, thinking I was happy, and knowing that I was not. I was in the condition of a prisoner in the old Bastille, suddenly let loose after a forty years’ confinement. I could scarce trust myself with myself. It was like passing out of Time into Eternity—for it is a sort of Eternity for a man to have his Time all to himself. It

seemed to me that I had more time on my hands than I could ever manage. From a poor man, poor in Time, I was suddenly lifted up into a vast revenue; I could see no end of my possessions: I wanted some steward, or judicious bailiff, to manage my estates in Time for me. . . .

"I am no longer * * * *, clerk to the Firm of, &c. I am Retired Leisure. I am to be met with in trim gardens. I am already come to be known by my vacant face and careless gesture, perambulating at no fixed pace, nor with any settled purpose. I walk about; not to and from. They tell me, a certain *cum dignitate* air, that has been buried so long with my other good parts, has begun to shoot forth in my person. I grow into gentility perceptibly. When I take up a newspaper, it is to read the state of the opera. *Opus operatum est*. I have done all that I came into this world to do. I have worked task-work, and have the rest of the day to myself."—*The Superannuated Man*.

Did any man ever before get just this angle of vision? And quite as nondescript as the substance is the style—a thing of no law—incoherent, iterative, stuttering, formless. Yet it is a style of infinite modulation, and it never fails to accord with either the wildest mirth or the most moving pathos. Its quality is pre-eminently the quality that in music we call "expression," which comes from the performer alone—the instrument will not yield it to another's touch. Lamb, in short, like the patient whom he describes as lording it on a sick-bed, lords it incontestably in his own realm: "Within the four curtains he is absolute."

The name of Thomas de Quincey takes us northward again to the associations of the Lake country and Scotland.

He was born in Manchester, lost his father at seven, and at seventeen ran away from the Manchester Grammar School (where he had proved himself a better "Grecian" than the headmaster) to seek out the author of the *Lyrical Ballads*. Such, at any rate, was his first intention. What he actually did was to take a solitary tramp of several months through the romantic regions of Wales. Then he drifted to London and passed a winter of

*Thomas de
Quincey,
1785-1859.*

obscurity and semi-starvation in the streets of that city. He was finally traced by his friends and sent to Oxford, but he took no degree there, characteristically disappearing at examination time. We scarcely need his assurance that he was of a sensitive, dreamy disposition, and much given to solitary study and meditation. He declared that he had passed more of his life in absolute solitude, for intellectual purposes, than any person he had ever heard of. He thus amassed an immense store of knowledge, particularly in history, philosophy, and literature. In this respect, and especially in his familiarity with German learning, he was like Coleridge. He was like him also in another never-to-be-forgotten though less important fact, that he fell a victim to opium. His introduction to the drug took place at Oxford, but his slavery to it did not begin till he was twenty-eight, after his character and habits were practically determined. For some time after leaving Oxford he oscillated between London, with Coleridge and Lamb as the attractions, and Grasmere, in the neighborhood of Wordsworth and Southey, settling finally at Grasmere. In 1816 he married. In 1821 he was urged to write the story of his life for the *London Magazine*. The resulting *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* was another of those strikingly original things with which that favored generation was almost yearly startled, and De Quincey, then in middle life, became settled in a literary career. For nearly forty years more he pursued his strange way, living sometimes with, sometimes apart from, his family, mostly at Edinburgh, whither he was drawn by Wilson, the editor of *Blackwood's* and his lifelong friend, reading, writing, and struggling with the terrible enemy which he never conquered.

The fourteen volumes of his collected works are of a most miscellaneous character. "Judas Iscariot," "Pagan Oracles," "Roman Meals," "Rhetoric," "Milton," "Dr. Parr," "Political Economy," "The Last Days of Kant," are examples of his subjects. There is scarcely a large, coherent treatise among them, though on the other hand they are not so disjointed as

is much of Coleridge's prose. We need not stay upon the historical and biographical sketches, which, considered merely as such, have all been superseded. The speculative and critical papers are of more permanent value. De Quincey's mind was keenly analytical. He was alive to the subtlest distinctions of thought and feeling. No one has been quicker than he to detect a fallacy or a quibble. His own diction is probably more studiously precise, exemplifying more delicate discriminations, than that of any other English writer. It follows that whenever he has anything to say upon such matters as rhetoric or style, or when he selects a higher theme and writes *On Wordsworth's Poetry* or *On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth*, he is well worth listening to. Better still, one likes to listen to him. For his intellectual acumen is united to a sensibility that humanizes whatever he touches. It is human sympathy, for instance, even more than historical insight that makes his *Joan of Arc* such a clairvoyant exposition of character. His work in this kind might have been very great indeed, had he only learned to overcome several vexatious defects. He is hampered both by his fondness for hair-splitting, which often stops the progress of his thought, and by the weight of his learning, which swells his text with irrelevant details, and which overflows into digressions, parentheses, and footnotes. His unworldliness, too, often betrayed him into strange caprices, leading him to intrude his personality upon the reader at times when the intrusion is very trying to the patience. That Lamb could always do this sort of thing without giving offence, and De Quincey not always, is due in part, of course, to the difference in their personalities, but in part also to Lamb's greater *savoir faire*.

De Quincey's greatest claim to consideration lies in those more purely imaginative portions of his work which may be fittingly described as extravaganzas. Some, like his *Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts*, are chiefly playful or humorous, and De Quincey has often been extolled as a humorist. But here again his eccentricities stand in his way. There are

those who find him only pedantic and absurd. His angle of vision is often unique, and indulgent readers may be highly amused; still, he is never so sure of all suffrages as Lamb. But when he enters his own region of imaginative and impassioned rhetoric, of "prose-poetry," he is supreme. This he does at intervals in his *Confessions*, sometimes in *The Spanish Military Nun*, *Joan of Arc*, and *The Revolt of the Tartars* (almost purely a romance), but most deliberately and effectively in certain of the *Suspiria de Profundis* papers, such as *The English Mail Coach* and *Levana and our Ladies of Sorrow*.

"Passion of sudden death! that once in youth I read and interpreted by the shadows of thy averted signs! rapture of panic taking the shape (which among tombs in churches I have seen) of woman bursting her sepulchral bonds—of woman's Ionic form bending forward from the ruins of her grave with arching foot, with eyes upraised, with clasped adoring hands—waiting, watching, trembling, praying for the trumpet's call to rise from dust forever! Ah, vision too fearful of shuddering humanity on the brink of almighty abysses! Vision that didst start back, that didst reel away, like a shrivelling scroll from before the wrath of fire racing on the wings of the wind! Epilepsy so brief of horror, wherefore is it that thou canst not die? Passing so suddenly into darkness, wherefore is it that still thou sheddest thy sad funeral blights upon the gorgeous mosaics of dreams? Fragment of music too passionate, heard once, and heard no more, what aileth thee, that thy deep rolling chords come up at intervals through all the worlds of sleep, and, after forty years, have lost no element of horror?"

It is in passages like this, the beginning of the "Dream-Fugue" in the *English Mail-Coach*, that we recognize De Quincey's surest hand. As Lamb harked back to the quaintness of Fuller, De Quincey harked back to the splendor and rhythm of Browne. He endeavored to put into prose such harmonies as his other favorite, Milton, put into verse. He called to his assistance a vocabulary of extraordinary range and picturesqueness, and all the resources of a stately and ornate rhetoric—inversion, ellipsis, apostrophe, tone-quality, rhythm,—with the result that in his pages written English has attained perhaps its farthest

stage of purely imaginative eloquence. Certainly, in no other writer has prose reached so far over the bounds of music, and in no other has it given such lively reality to the fleeting phantasmagory of imagination and dreams.

Walter Savage Landor, whose reactionary tendencies took a very different direction, was another strange product of this complex period. He also passed much of his life in isolation—the isolation, in his case, of intellectual and social pride. “I strove with none,” he declared, “for none was worth my strife.” Southey was almost his only literary friend. He was a native of Shakespeare’s county, Warwick, and was brought up in considerable luxury. His violent temper got him constantly into trouble. He left Oxford as the result of a prank to which he refused to confess; once, in the heat of his republican ardor, he rushed off to Spain to help resist the aggressions of Napoleon; in the midst of social gayety at Bath he contracted a hasty and unfortunate marriage; he nearly impoverished himself by the purchase of an Abbey on the borders of Wales; and when life in England became unendurable, as it several times did, he fled to Italy. He died there, still unreconciled with his children, but cared for by Browning, in his ninetieth year.

Landor began his writing with poetry, publishing as early as 1795. He was an accomplished Greek and Latin scholar, and his classical training profoundly influenced all his work, giving it a purity, finish, and restraint in strange contrast to his own romantic temperament. His long blank verse tale of *Gebir* is compact of both classical and romantic qualities. It was published in the same year as the *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798, but was too lofty and cold to win popular approval. His *Hellenics* were actually composed and published in Latin (1815) before they were reclothed in English. But of all his poems, containing among them literally scores of exquisite trifles which will not suffer by comparison with Herrick’s *Hesperides*, though of very

different flavor, almost the only thing at all widely known is the little eight-line commemoration of *Rose Aylmer*:

“Ah what avails the sceptred race,
Ah what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

“Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee.”

His significant contribution to literature began in later life, when in his retirement at Florence he composed his long prose series of *Imaginary Conversations* (1824–1829). In these, great men and women of ancient or modern times are represented as conversing upon some theme of presumably contemporaneous interest. Hannibal, for instance, exchanges words of admiration and pity with his dying enemy Marcellus; Peter the Great charges his son, the Prince Alexis, with treason; Queen Elizabeth talks with her minister, Lord Burleigh, about pensioning Edmund Spenser; Addison rebukes Steele for running into debt; Southey and Landor themselves hold a stately conference over Milton's poetry and kindred matters. There is little attempt to re-tell history—almost everything but the characters and the central incident is invented; and the dialogues have little dramatic value, since there is no plot and scarcely any action. Now and then there is a highly dramatic situation, as in the powerful *Tiberius and Vipsania*. But for the most part we read for the weight of sententious utterance, so fittingly put into the mouths of the wise and great, and for the remarkable clarity and purity of the style. Indeed, Landor, himself a refined Epicurean, is for the literary epicure. There is no violence or romantic excess in his pages. If he never attempts De Quincey's flights, neither does he experience his falls. His philosophy and criticism may be impaired by many intellectual crotchets, but his pages are almost without æsthetic blemish.

The virtues he sought and attained were Greek symmetry and repose, and passion itself was kept subject to them.

Leofric. O light, laughing simpleton! But what wouldst thou? I came not hither to pray; and yet if praying would satisfy thee, or remove the drougt, I would ride up straightway to Saint Michael's and pray until morning.

Godiva. I would do the same, O Leofric! but God hath turned away his ear from holier lips than mine. Would my own dear husband hear me, if I implored him for what is easier to accomplish,—what he can do like God?

Leofric. How! What is it?

Godiva. I would not, in the first hurry of your wrath, appeal to you, my loving Lord, in behalf of these unhappy men who have offended you.

Leofric. Unhappy! Is that all?

Godiva. Unhappy they must surely be, to have offended you so grievously. What a soft air breathes over us! How quiet and serene and still an evening! How calm are the heavens and the earth!—Shall none enjoy them; not even we, my Leofric? The sun is ready to set; let it never set, O Leofric, on your anger. These are not my words; they are better than mine. Should they lose their virtue from my unworthiness in uttering them?

Landor continued to write down to the very last year of his vigorous old age, and after fully two generations had followed him on the pathway to fame. Two other of his books should be mentioned, *Pericles and Aspasia* (1836) and *The Pentameron* (1837). The first is in the form of letters, and attempts to reconstruct for the imagination the social life of Athens in the brilliant age of Pericles. Both are worthy of the author of the *Conversations*, and with them make a body of prose which will always be cherished by a select, though undoubtedly limited, number of readers.

Thomas Babington Macaulay, whose birth fell by a very narrow margin within the eighteenth century, was half a generation younger than the men who have just been treated, and he stands, indeed, with one foot entirely in the succeeding Victorian age, where we shall have to treat at least one man

(Carlyle) older than he. But Macaulay was as precocious in his development as these men were tardy; his work was attracting attention in the same decade when Lamb, De Quincey, and Landor were winning their laurels; and he was so clearly a creation and exponent of the new journalism, that his place is manifestly here. He was born to a competence which through family misfortunes he failed to enjoy beyond the period of his education. When his father's business interests began to suffer from too great a devotion to the cause of the abolition of the West Indian slave trade, the young Cambridge graduate went home to London unselfishly to assume the burdens of the family. This was in 1824. The year before that he had begun to contribute to *Knight's Quarterly Magazine*, and the year following he was engaged by Jeffrey to write for the great *Edinburgh*. In 1825, before he was yet twenty-five years of age, appeared the well-known essay on *Milton*, a work which, whatever be its rhetorical and temperamental defects, is almost as mature in grasp as it is brilliant in execution. It met with wide favor, and Macaulay, from supporting a Whig Review, found the road easy to the support of the Whig party in practical politics. He was called to the Bar in 1826 and entered the House of Commons in 1830, where his speech on the Reform Bill marked him as an orator of the highest ability. The remainder of his life was spent in almost continuous devotion to public service. Four years in India as legal adviser to the Supreme Council repaired his fortunes. He was twice again in Parliament and once in the Cabinet. He was honored with the rank of baron in 1857, and upon his death, two years later, was interred in the Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey.

That Macaulay, through all this public activity, should have accomplished so much private literary work, and of a kind that involved so much reading, is little short of marvellous. The total number of his critical and historical *Essays* contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* (first collected in 1843) was thirty-six,

and each one of them is almost a treatise in itself. Besides other miscellaneous work, there were the speeches, the poems—*Lays of Ancient Rome* (1842),—and the *History of England from the Accession of James the Second* (1848, 1855, 1861), to which he gave the energies of his later years. This last was planned on so great a scale that though at the time of his death he had completed almost five volumes, he had covered little more than fifteen years of actual English history. The poems are few in number, but much of Macaulay's fame has, from the time of their publication, rested upon them. In regard to them it is possible to raise the same query as in regard to Scott's. Macaulay's temperament was certainly still farther than Scott's from the essentially poetic, and he was himself very diffident about making any poetic claim. His imagination was historical, or re-creative only, not creative. But this order of imagination at least he had, together with a sense of rhythm, and these are sufficient for the kind of poetry which he essayed— for ballads like

"Lars Porsena of Clusium
By the Nine Gods he swore,"

or

"Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all glories are!"

As between the *Essays* and the *History*, the latter is undoubtedly his greater work. Considered merely as history it may have faults of inaccuracy and party bias, but as a brilliant and detailed historical narrative it has never been excelled. He aimed to make history pictorial, a reconstruction of life that should be as interesting as romance; and, thanks largely no doubt to what Scott had already done in fiction, he succeeded. He brought to the work, moreover, his own special gifts, his power of bringing instantly into one focus the accumulations of a prodigious memory, his faculty for drawing illuminating parallels, and the grasp of detail as well as the insight into men and measures that alone can reduce to order the confusion of human events. But the essays, which began back in 1825, illustrate al-



ALTER SAVAGE LANDOR
THOMAS DE QUINCEY

CHARLES LAMB
THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

most equally well Macaulay's several virtues. The historical ones are like histories in miniature, grouping large events about a central character, and those on English themes can almost be put together into a continuous history. They are above all clear, lively, concrete, and substantive. Every sentence says something, and says it so sharply and succinctly that there is never a moment's doubt about the meaning. The briefest example will suffice to illustrate:

"The Serjeants made proclamation. Hastings advanced to the bar and bent his knee. The culprit was indeed not unworthy of that great presence. He had ruled an extensive and populous country, had made laws and treaties, had sent forth armies, had set up and pulled down princes. And in his high place he had so borne himself that all had feared him, that most had loved him, and that hatred itself could deny him no title to glory except virtue. He looked like a great man and not like a bad man. A person small and emaciated, yet deriving dignity from a carriage which, while it indicated deference to the court, indicated also habitual self-possession and self-respect; a high and intellectual forehead; a brow, pensive, but not gloomy; a mouth of inflexible decision; a face, pale and worn, but serene, on which was written, as legibly as under the picture in the council-chamber at Calcutta, *Mens æqua in arduis*; such was the aspect with which the great Proconsul presented himself to his judges."—*Warren Hastings*.

Jeffrey called it a new style. It was new, perhaps, in its vigor and dash, and in its occasional splashes of romantic color. But in its main features it was conservative—in its adherence, for instance, to the standard vocabulary, and its employment of the time-honored rhetorical devices of balance and antithesis. Indeed, a close examination will show that Macaulay derives very directly from Johnson as Johnson is seen in his later and less pompous work, such as, for instance, his life of Addison in the *Lives of the Poets*. Even his brilliance is more akin to the splendor of Gibbon and Burke than to the gorgeousness of De Quincey and the later romanticists. The glitter of the style is rather too hard to be beautiful, and its movement is too incessantly staccato to be restful, but with its clearness and force it

has proved an almost perfect instrument for an age of journalism. Macaulay is thus the true perpetuator of the traditionary "middle style," the transmitter to the nineteenth century, and so on to the twentieth, of that clear, formal, dignified, and practical prose of which Cowley and Dryden first set the manner in the seventeenth. He, of all the writers of the age in which we have considered him, is the best link between the past and the present; and, as a matter of fact, long before his death and De Quincey's and Landor's, the Victorian age, with its several groups of writers scarcely less diverse and brilliant than those who went just before, had been ushered in.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE VICTORIAN AGE—POETRY

1830-1880

<i>William IV.</i> 1830-37	TENNYSON	Heine
<i>Reform Bill passed</i> 1832	BROWNING	Chopin
<i>Suppression of Colonial Slav-</i>	MRS. BROWNING	Mendelssohn
<i>ery</i> 1833	ARNOLD	Strauss
<i>Tractarian (Oxford, or High</i>	CLOUGH	Ranke, Mommsen
<i>Church) Movement</i> 1833-41	(<i>The Novel,</i>	Auerbach
<i>New Poor Law</i> 1834	<i>Chapter XIX)</i>	Lamartine
<i>Accession of Victoria</i> 1837	DICKENS	Hugo, De Musset
<i>Free Trade Agitation</i> 1841	THACKERAY	Balzac, Dumas
<i>Repeal of the Corn Laws</i> 1846	MISS BRONTË	Guizot
<i>Chartist Rising</i> 1848	GEORGE ELIOT	De Tocqueville
<i>Crimean War</i> 1854	(<i>Prose, Chap-</i>	Sainte-Beuve
<i>Indian Mutiny</i> 1857	<i>ter XX)</i>	Renan
<i>Second Reform Bill</i> 1867	CARLYLE	Turgenieff, Tolstoi
<i>Irish Land Bill</i> 1870	RUSKIN	Emerson
<i>Irish Land League</i> 1879	NEWMAN	Poe, Hawthorne
<i>Fall of Conservative Ministry, 1880</i>	ARNOLD	Longfellow, Lowell

It is not difficult to distinguish the large movements in national life and thought which determined the character of the nineteenth century. They are, first, the spread of democracy, a humanitarian movement, and second, the growth of the scientific spirit. The first is political and social, the second intellectual and social. The conservative reaction, the check to the spread of republican principles which followed the failure of the French Revolution, was not of long continuance. Shortly after the close of the Napoleonic Wars with the victory of Waterloo in 1815, the forward movement began to be felt again. In England, progress took the shape of cautious reform instead of violent revolution. In 1829 the Whigs succeeded in securing the admission of Roman Catholics to Parliament and other high offices. In 1832 the Reform Bill considerably extended

the voting privilege among the middle class. In 1833 slavery in the colonies was suppressed. In 1846 the repeal of the corn laws established free trade. In 1867 a still more sweeping reform bill was enacted into law. The only disturbances of importance abroad were the war in the Crimea, through which England again entered continental politics, and the Indian Mutiny, which resulted in destroying the power of the East India Company. Both of these took place in the sixth decade. Meanwhile national expansion continued, especially through the attention paid to colonial development in Canada and Australia. In education and science, progress was equally marked. A system of national education was introduced in 1834; free libraries were established in 1850; and in the following year a great world's exposition was held at the Crystal Palace. The Liverpool and Manchester Railroad was opened in 1830; the electric telegraph came into use in 1837; and there was a concurrent development of commerce by steam navigation. Within the Church a counter-tendency toward ritualism was for a while apparent, in the so-called Tractarian, or Oxford Movement, which strongly affected the Universities; but that too was only such a quickening of the conscience as naturally accompanied the quickening that was going on in every direction. Nearly all these things touched literature, and are mirrored in one way or another in the poems of Tennyson, the novels of Dickens and Kingsley, and the essays of Carlyle, Ruskin, Newman, and Arnold.

The year 1832, the date of the death of Scott, is ordinarily given as marking the end of the first literary period of the century. But dates are seldom altogether satisfactory dividing lines in literature: in this case, looking at poetry alone, we find that before 1832 there was a brief interregnum, not incomparable to that which took place more than a century earlier between the death of Dryden and the appearance of Pope. For Scott wrote no poetry in his later life; and when Byron died in 1824 Keats and Shelley were both gone, Coleridge's poetic faculties

were in abeyance, and Wordsworth, though destined to many years of life and labor, had quite accomplished his significant work. For six years there were but the voices of such minor lyrists as Hood and Keble. Then, in 1830, when the queen whose name we give to the succeeding era was but eleven years old and still seven years from her accession, appeared a little volume entitled *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical*, by Alfred Tennyson. With this date, therefore, we may regard the new era as begun, though a full dozen years were yet to elapse before this second poetic renaissance should gather momentum.

The lives of the Victorian men of letters have been mostly long and outwardly peaceful, in contrast to the often stormy careers of their immediate predecessors. Tennyson was born in that memorable birth-year, 1809, which brought into the world a company of the very greatest men of the century, including Darwin, Gladstone, Lincoln, Poe, Chopin, and Mendelssohn. He was the fourth of seven sons in a family of twelve children; the Tennyson household, indeed, seems to have comprised about one fourth of the inhabitants of the little village of Somersby, where his father was Rector. The village is situated in the comparatively flat "fen-country" of Lincolnshire, not far from the eastern coast. The poet has given us many a charming picture of the region—now of

"The seven elms, the poplars four
That stand beside my father's door;"

now of the

"gray twilight pour'd
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep;"

and now of the waste enormous marshes that "stretched wide and wild" away to the "heaped hills that mound the sea." Past the rectory flowed a brook, in all probability the brook that came "from haunts of coot and hern . . . To bicker down a valley." And it was here that in 1824, Tennyson, evidently

already a poet, took so to heart the death of Byron. Even before that date, he tells us, he had composed "an epic of six thousand lines à la Walter Scott;" and it was only three years after, in 1827, that a local bookseller published the extremely juvenile *Poems by Two Brothers* (Charles and Alfred)—an event which the boys celebrated by hiring a carriage and driving off to the seashore, no doubt to recite the verses to the music of the waves. The poems of Thomson, it should be recorded, were among the distinct formative influences of this period. Scott was speedily outgrown, and Byron also, save for an occasional likeness traceable later in Tennyson's more impassioned poems, such as *Maud*.

Before the date of his juvenile venture, Alfred had spent several years at a neighboring Grammar School, but his best early training was received at home. In 1828, in company with Charles, he joined their elder brother Frederick at Trinity College, Cambridge, where Macaulay had been but four years before, and Byron but twenty, and where he might see upon the walls the portraits of such eminent predecessors as Bacon, Cowley, Dryden, and Newton. There he made a number of valuable friends, Milnes, for instance, the biographer of Keats, and particularly Arthur Henry Hallam, son of the historian, whom he was so soon to lose and so deathlessly to mourn. He won the Chancellor's medal with a poem, *Timbuctoo*, which, like the earlier poems, has not been included in his collected works. But an important publication followed in 1830—the *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical* (now the "Juvenilia"), containing among them such evidences of genius as *Mariana*, *Recollections of the Arabian Nights*, *The Poet*, and the *Ode to Memory*. In the summer of the same year, he and Hallam, in apparent imitation of Landor and Byron, joined the Spanish insurgents in the Pyrenees. Two years later, after the death of his father and his withdrawal from Cambridge, he published another volume, which contained, among other notable poems, *The Lady of Shalott*, *The Two Voices*, *Enone*, *The Palace of Art*, *The May*

Queen, The Lotos-Eaters, and A Dream of Fair Women. Men of discernment were not lacking to hail in these volumes the advent of a new poet. But there was adverse criticism also, from the same conservative sources that still withheld approval of Shelley and Keats, and Tennyson kept silence for ten years, maturing his faculties and taste and perfecting his already remarkable technique. Then, in 1842, when public taste had doubtless changed through the waning of elder authority, he published a revision of his early poems and a new volume entitled *English Idyls, and Other Poems*. The English Idyls (spelled with one *l* to distinguish them from the *Idylls of the King*) consisted of a number of simple, Wordsworth-like sketches and stories, such as *The Gardener's Daughter* and *Dora*, admirable all, but not quite the poet's best. The best were to be found among the "other" poems—the majestic epic fragment of the *Morte d'Arthur*, the noble *Ulysses* which, Carlyle intimated, had in it thoughts "too deep for tears," and the lofty and passionate monologue of *Locksley Hall*.

From this time on Tennyson's right to a place among the noteworthy English poets was practically undisputed. *The Princess* in 1847 captured its thousands, and the *Nation's* songs which were added to it in 1850—"Sweet and Accepted low," "The splendor falls," etc.—their tens of thousands. In 1850, too, appeared *In Memoriam*, in a pleasing verse-form that was virtually, though not entirely, new; the poet was made Poet Laureate, to succeed Wordsworth, taking the laurel "greener from the brows of him that utter'd nothing base;" and with the seventh edition of his poems the next year appeared the beautiful dedication *To the Queen*, a rejected but characteristic stanza of which ran

"Your name is blown on every wind,
Your flag thro' austral ice is borne,
And glimmers to the northern morn,
And floats in either golden Ind."

We are carried back to Spenser's dedication of the *Faërie Queene* to Elizabeth, and it is a matter for gratulation that in two of the most illustrious periods of England's history, when two such revered sovereigns sat upon the throne, there should have been two such worthy poets to celebrate the conjunction. Among other poems with which Tennyson, in the words of the appointment, "adorned" his office, were the *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* in 1852, and the famous commemoration of the heroic charge at Balaclava in 1854, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*. His next long poem *Maud* (1855), was not so well received as the earlier poems, and there are still many who do not like Tennyson in the rôle of a railer against social wrong; but the poem is overwhelmingly poetic, and few things of Tennyson's are more universally admired than its central love-lyric, "Come into the garden, Maud." Four years later, he quite won back popularity with the first series, four in number, of the *Idylls of the King* (1859), and five years later still with the most widely popular of all his single volumes, *Enoch Arden and Other Poems* (1864). After that, he continued the Arthurian Idylls until they finally made a rounded book of twelve connected poems. He also attempted drama, writing, besides four other plays, a historical trilogy of the making of England, *Harold, Becket, and Queen Mary*. The reception of these was not flattering, though *Becket* and *The Cup* were both successfully staged.

All this while, Tennyson was living a life of as much retirement as he could secure, part of the time in a corner of the Isle of Wight, where, shortly after his marriage in 1850, he purchased the estate of Farringford, and part of the time at another home, Aldworth, in Surrey. A man of large, powerful frame, and striking features, he was yet troubled somewhat with a nervous affection which made him very sensitive to the publicity which his fame forced upon him. In 1884 he was raised to the peerage, like Macaulay before him. In 1886 he published *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*, a complement of the early

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MATTHEW ARNOLD
ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON
ROBERT BROWNING

poem, *Locksley Hall*, which except for some diffuseness is quite up to the same high poetic level. Of the many poems that still succeeded may be mentioned the biographical *Merlin and the Gleam* and the anticipative *Crossing the Bar*, both written in his eighty-first year. "Mind you put *Crossing the Bar* at the end of all editions of my poems," he said shortly before his death. In October, 1892, he died, and was buried in Westminster Abbey by the side of Browning.

Tennyson is one of the four or five poets of the century who gave their lives to their art with entire singleness of devotion.

An evidence of this is to be seen in the perfection which his incessant revision gave him in the mechanics of his craft. Mechanics, however, will not account for all. The perfection which he attained has little of the formal regularity of the classical writers. Indeed he was condemned at the outset on the score of extreme irregularity. The perfection lies rather in lifting every line and phrase above the level of prose and partakes therefore of substance as well as of form. He combined in some degree the music of both Coleridge and Shelley with the color of Keats, and to the example which he set of formal finish is to be traced the almost flawless craftsmanship of the hundreds of versifiers who have followed him. But these hundreds of versifiers have not been able to equal him in the poetic substance with which he always filled his forms. Rarely, except in a very few poems to be noted below, was even a single line set down without something in it that only a poet could conceive or phrase. There is more such poetry in *A Dream of Fair Women* than in all the minor Victorian poets put together. *Ulysses* alone would establish a reputation.

It would be tedious to enumerate all that goes to make up this poetic substance. One thing, slight in itself, but frequently noted, is the keenness and minuteness of observation that puts into his poetry details which only the poetic mind perceives to be characteristic. Tennyson's observation was not always

true. When he rode on the first railway train from Liverpool to Manchester, he made the strange mistake of thinking that the wheels ran in a groove. Yet the familiar line

Composite in *Locksley Hall*,

Character

of his Verse.

"Let the great world spin forever down the
ringing grooves of change,"

is not the less poetic in both conception and execution. It is so everywhere. Observation alone would not give the result. The thing must be put poetically, and Tennyson always puts it so. "The landscape *winking* through the heat," "A million *emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime*," "By that old bridge which, half in ruins then, *Still makes a hoary eyebrow* for the gleam Beyond it,"—a hundred instances are at hand.

In this connection should be noted the amount and character of Tennyson's "landscape poetry," and the part it played in heightening men's sensitiveness to natural beauty. Wordsworth could not often rest in the mere vision of nature, seeking usually to give it transcendental meanings. This acted as a veil for the ordinary observer, who rather required to have the beauties of nature actually painted for him. Even that, it would seem, was scarcely sufficient. Turner was all this while putting on canvas such glorious landscapes as had not before been dreamed of, yet few saw them until they were shamed by Ruskin into looking. Tennyson was assuredly doing his part. Take the *Mariana* poems, *The Miller's Daughter*, *Enone*, *The Palace of Art*, *The Daisy*.

"I climb'd the roofs at break of day;
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.

I stood among the silent statues,
And statued pinnacles, mute as they.

"How faintly-flush'd, how phantom-fair,
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there

A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys
And snowy dells in a golden air."

The ordinary country poetry and nature poetry of which English literature has its share is not quite the same thing, as will become readily apparent from a study of a few of these delicately drawn landscapes. And along with this love of nature is the entire romantic inheritance of which Tennyson so fully availed himself. It is seen in the glamour of the *Recollections of the Arabian Nights*, in the languorous melancholy of the *Lotos-Eaters*, in the weird music of the *Dying Swan*, and in the mediæval atmosphere of *The Lady of Shalott*, *Sir Galahad*, and the *Morte d'Arthur*, poems which led up finally to the great Round Table series.

In strong contrast with these romantic traits are the simplicity and homely realism which Tennyson—in obedience to the lesson of his own *Palace of Art*, that the poet should draw near to humanity—employed in some of his work. An extreme example of this is *Dora*, an idyl which naturally met with Wordsworth's approval, and which reminded Carlyle "of the Book of Ruth." But Tennyson admitted that the writing of that poem gave



SIR GALAHAD.

(From a painting by G. F. Watts.)

him much trouble, and notwithstanding the general success of his English idyls, it is easy to perceive that he is not quite at home in their manner. Sometimes he combined the rustic simplicity with a deeper and richer romantic coloring, as in the pathetic if ever so slightly falsetto *May Queen*. *Enoch Arden*, too, is a poem in which the near and the far are strangely blended, the homely concerns of humble life being dressed in a garb of fantastic poetry and set part of the time against a background of gorgeous tropical dreams. The combination does not seem to displease the uncritical reader. But Tennyson's success in human portraiture is best exemplified by some of his later dramatic tales and monologues, chiefly in dialect. Not only was he, in these poems, among the first to set the fashion for a school of modern poets, but in such characters as the modern "Rizpah" who gathers up for holy burial the bones of her errant son, or the Grandmother who at Annie's age "could have wept with the best," or the Northern Farmer who questioned "god-moighty's" judgment in taking him away "Wi' aäf the cows to cauve an' Thurnaby hoälm's to plow," he attained to a dramatic sympathy and lifelikeness such as he could not do elsewhere, not even in his long formal dramas. In all these poems he has shown yet another side of his versatile genius, his ability to tell a story. In sum, he was a most freely eclectic poet who in his composite verse has exploited nearly all poetic methods, and even harmonized, so far as may be, widely divergent schools.

Too little space remains for adequate treatment of the several major poems. The lack of concordant judgment upon them—one critic preferring this and another that—might raise the query whether they really constitute

*His Longer
Poems.*

Tennyson's great work, however much of his best work they may, and undoubtedly do, contain. *The Princess* attacks a social question of the day, maintaining the unity of woman's cause with man's and her right therefore to equal social and intellectual privileges, while still recognizing to the full the essential difference of her nature. But Ida and her

mediæval-modern university which no man is allowed to enter on pain of death, and which is finally taken as it were by escalade and storm, are most fantastically conceived. The story is a medley, the parts of which are supposed to be successively invented by a group of narrators whiling away an afternoon at a picnic gathering. It is extremely diverting, and there are many who find in it the poet's happiest effort. Others feel that its mock-heroic character leaves a confused impression; that its emphasis is false, defeating its serious aim of pleading for the elevation of woman by being half the time a satire on her inordinate demands; and that it needlessly harrows the reader's feelings by exciting sympathy for a noble and womanly heroine and then subjecting her to an undeserved humiliation at the hands of some very unmanly and unmannerly boys. Indeed, in more than one of Tennyson's long poems may be detected a certain wavering of purpose, a want of unity, which his most earnest attempts at revision did not avail to remove. The hero of *Locksley Hall* is not quite heroic enough in his capacity of lover to give weight to the incomparably noble sentiments which he utters upon love and life in general. *Maud* is an admirable monodrama, and one cannot but rejoice to see Tennyson, who too often played the drawing-room poet, let his masculine, berserker passion loose in this poem which his strait-laced generation so disliked; but the Faust-like regeneration at the end seems artificial because the individual drama is not vitally linked with the social one, and a national war, even granting that its cause were just and that war could be a remedy for the evils of peace, is a queer sort of plaster for a man to apply to a privately wounded heart. Those who feel these things and hesitate therefore to admit the entire greatness of the poem, must find their account either in the story alone, or in the moral alone, or in the poetry itself, which at least never fails. Even the *Idylls of the King* may be criticised upon the ground of over-idealization—that the hero Arthur is an "impeccable prig," and that the modern standards and Christian

atmosphere are a total anachronism. Those who have beforehand formed their ideas of the Round Table from Malory and the old romances are seldom pleased. Others are disposed to be less critical. At least they find here a series of delightful stories, told in a newly modulated, never wearying blank verse; with characters enveloped in a haze of romance, far enough removed from ordinary life not to be gauged by quite ordinary standards, yet fundamentally human, heroic, and lovable; and dimly looming through it all the overshadowing allegory of "Soul at war with Sense," the symbolism of the Round Table as "an image of the mighty world," and the everlasting truth of Arthur's parting reassurance:

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

Lancelot and Elaine, Guinevere and Galahad, have been quite made over in Tennyson's hands, but it is better that the thousands who do not read Malory should know them thus than not at all.

In Memoriam is a poem of a wholly different kind—a nineteenth-century *Lycidas*. In 1833, Arthur Hallam, while making a tour on the continent with his father, died suddenly at Vienna. The loss affected Tennyson deeply, and as he brooded over it, the feelings and thoughts that rose in him gradually took the shape of brief poems in quatrains of a peculiar, unvarying form, each poem expressive of a single mood or idea,—

"Short swallow-flights of song, that dip
Their wings in tears, and skim away."

When these were ultimately gathered and arranged, they made a long poem not unlike a sonnet-series, in which may be traced the progress of grief, from the first deep sense of personal loss, through despair and doubt and questioning, to a conviction of the uses of sorrow, and therefore to faith and peace. The most

beautiful parts are the earlier ones, such as the pictures of the home-coming of the ship that bore Arthur's body, or the recurring descriptions of Christmas-tide. The most deeply passionate are perhaps those central ones in which doubt grows darkest and the bereaved questions the moral order of the universe:

"Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams ?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life. . . .

"O life as futile, then, as frail !
O for thy voice to soothe and bless !
What hope of answer, or redress ?
Behind the veil, behind the veil."

The poet's final attitude is best expressed in the introductory section which was written last, and which is better understood after the rest has been read.

In more than its mere chronological position may this poem, which grew simply out of a personal sorrow and thus eloquently testified that the sorrow was not vain, be regarded as the central poem of its age. Tennyson always lived and wrote close to the age; even in the *Idylls of the King* he did not get far away. He was an Englishman of his day, with a profound reverence for law and a faith in institutions. His humanitarian interest in political progress and social welfare is shown in many things—in lines like those upon Freedom "broadening slowly down," which speakers in Parliament are glad to quote at need; in the *Princess*, as already described; in all the poems of humble life; in the faintly Utopian dreams that gleam through the darkness of *Maud* and the two *Locksley Halls*. His interest in science is seen in the readiness with which he turns its discoveries and applications to poetic use, ever finding therein new figures to serve old truth. It is seen, too, in his readiness to welcome new truth. The doctrine of evolution, in particular, which was taking shape through his maturing years, engaged his earnest attention. It was largely this, of course, that set him anxiously to question-

ing, the "riddle of the painful earth" and the ultimate destiny of man, and so led to those half-philosophical, half-religious poems of which *The Higher Pantheism*, *Flower in the Crannied Wall*, and *The Making of Man* are examples, and the total outcome of which is simply the hope and trust which are voiced in these and a hundred others. Now nearly all these things are in *In Memoriam*, together with much of the poet's deeper nature and many of the finest examples of his art. Such a combination is not calculated to make a unified poem. No more than his other long poems does *In Memoriam* succeed in being that. But by its very composite character it becomes a more perfect exponent of its "divided age" than a poem with a single aim could be.

There need be no claim that in this, or in any other of his works, Tennyson contributed aught of significance to the thought of the century; his practical contribution, as has *Summary*. been said, is to be sought in his poetic art. But he did contribute to the higher spiritual life of the masses. He acted as a medium between the statesmen, philosophers, and scientists on the one hand, and the general reading public on the other. The truths which the former discovered and enunciated, he adorned, doubly insuring them against future loss, and presenting them but little above the level of common intelligence, where they would be of the widest service. This is an office no less worthy than it is difficult and rare, and the Victorian Laureate reaped his reward in a nation's gratitude. He was beyond question the most widely read English poet of his day, and he probably holds that position still.

In spite of marked differences, Robert Browning is very properly mentioned with Tennyson when we wish to name the two most important poets of the Victorian age. Closely contemporaneous, and of almost equal length of years and activity, he has come to hold a position of equal eminence. His four grandparents were respectively of English, German, Scotch, and Creole birth. His birthplace was Camberwell, a south

suburb of London, but he divided his time between England and Italy, and his work was almost as cosmopolitan in character as

Tennyson's was distinctively English. His schooling was mostly private, but his father gave him every opportunity for study and general culture. Latin, French, dancing, riding, fencing, drawing, music,—there was little that did not engage his wide-awake curiosity, his versatile talents, and his overflowing energies. Poetry attracted him early, and before long his devotion to it was as complete and consecrated as Tennyson's. Like Tennyson, too, he passed quickly from the influence of Byron to that of Shelley and Keats. Aroused to inquiry by a stray poem of Shelley's which he picked up at a bookstall, he learned for the first time that such a poet had existed and that he was already dead; nor was it an easy task to discover where the coveted works of this poet might be procured. Shortly afterward his own youthful poem, *Pauline* (1833), was anonymously published, and in this imaginary confession of a poet's heart the adored Shelley is to be found apostrophized as the "Sun-treader."

A year of fruitful travel in Russia and Italy ensued, and then he published over his own name *Paracelsus* (1835), a blank-verse dialogue, in substance a variation upon the old theme, so alluring to young poets, of the passion for knowledge. These poems found recognition but brought no fame; nor did those which immediately succeeded them, though *Sordello* (1840), the most difficult of his works to read, unfortunately established that reputation for obscurity from which he never quite freed himself. Then, slowly, by the series of *Bells and Pomegranates* (1841–1846), containing the dramas *Pippa Passes*, *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon*, *Colombe's Birthday*, and a long list of now very familiar *Dramatic Lyrics and Romances*; by *Christmas-Eve and Easter-Day* in 1850; by *Men and Women* in 1855; and by *Dramatis Personae* in 1864, he wrung from the public a suffrage, though never such a popularity as was accorded to Tenny-

son. Meanwhile the poetess, Elizabeth Barrett, whom in 1846 he had made Mrs. Browning, carrying her off in cavalier fashion against an unreasonable father's will, had brought him fifteen years of rare companionship and domestic felicity. These years were spent in Italy, mostly in residence in the old palace called Casa Guidi, in Florence, where so much of the best work of both was done, and where Mrs. Browning died in 1861. After her death, the poet returned to England, but usually passed his summers in Brittany. In 1868 he published *The Ring and the Book*, a poem of twenty thousand lines, not, it may be, his greatest work, but certainly a *magnum opus* in more respects than size. His amazing productivity never failed him, and he continued to write poems of varying quality to the very last. His later years were spent much in society, in strong contrast to the reclusive habits of Tennyson. In 1889 he felt drawn to Italy again, and there, at his son's home on the Grand Canal, in Venice, he suddenly died, on the very day on which his *Asolando* was published in London. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, on the last day of the year.

Browning's earliest work showed clearly the direction which his poetic genius was to take and to keep without material departure all through life. Poetry with him was seldom an end in itself; the mere creation of verbal music and beauty he deemed relatively unimportant. What he was interested in was the human soul—"little else," he declared, "is worth study;" and he constantly takes for his theme the development of the soul, or rather special moments in that development, employing poetry because it is the best instrument for his purpose. This is what is meant by calling him a metaphysical or psychological poet. It must not be inferred, however, that he works abstractly, after the method of philosophy. He works concretely, as a poet should. It is always the soul in a body, and in a very definite body—Luria's, Pompilia's, Guido's, Fra Lippo Lippi's, Saul's. This personality, moreover, is vividly set in its proper environ-

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ment. Loud or low, there is always the buzz of the Roman populace about Pompilia's tragedy; the red roofs of the houses smoke in the sun, or the scanty snowflakes of winter flitter through the air; and no detail of the murder is spared, down to the notches on the edge of the triangular-bladed Genoese dagger that did the ghastly work. Andrea del Sarto sits by the window and meditates upon his failure, while the chapel-bell hushes amid the evening stillness and the Fiesolan autumn landscape fades into a twilight-piece like a symbol of his own life. Saul in his spiritual agony is revealed erect and motionless in his tent, with arms outstretched on the cross-poles, while David tunes his harp to find the song that shall ease his suffering.

"At the first I saw naught but the blackness: but soon I descried
A something more black than the blackness—the vast, the upright
Main prop which sustains the pavilion: and slow into sight
Grew a figure against it, gigantic and blackest of all.
Then a sunbeam, that burst through the tent-roof, showed Saul.

"He stood as erect as that tent-prop, both arms stretched out wide
On the great cross-support in the centre, that goes to each side;
He relaxed not a muscle, but hung there as, caught in his pangs
And waiting his change, the king-serpent all heavily hangs,
Far away from his kind, in the pine, till deliverance come
With the spring-time,—so agonized Saul, drear and stark, blind
and dumb."

If, then, Browning is a metaphysical poet, it is evident that he is at the same time an intensely dramatic poet. That is to say, he employs the dramatic method of putting before us individuals under such conditions of actual life as serve to develop or at least accentuate the spiritual drama. In the pursuit of this method he shows some self-chosen limitations. He does not work in Shakespeare's broad way. A few characters, or even one, suffice, and the drama itself is so essentially of the inmost soul that his plays, even those in regular dramatic form, do not meet the external requirements of a perfect stage production. Neither does he attempt wholly to sink his own personality.

The words and emotions employed seem sometimes better to befit the poet than his puppets, especially when he is dealing with personages not of his own intellectual level. Again, he limits himself very largely to the portrayal of highly dramatic moments, neglecting, for these, the slower, progressive development that we are accustomed to look for in drama. The result of this is the sacrifice of action and minor incident, and most of that by-play, comic or sentimental, which doubtless makes for popularity.

Browning has, indeed, methods of making his drama complicated. A peculiar example is *Pippa Passes*, in which a single thread holds loosely together four several crises in lives that are totally unrelated. The scene of the drama is Asolo, in the Trevisan. A woman and her lover have murdered her husband; a sculptor has been deceived into bringing home a bride who is unworthy of him; an Italian patriot has resolved to kill the Austrian emperor; a bishop is plotting the destruction of Pippa whose heritage he unlawfully holds—all this on one day, the single day in the year which Pippa, the poor silk-winder, has for a holiday. Through these lives Pippa accidentally passes with her singing.

"The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in his heaven—
All's right with the world!"

There is no contact with the other characters except through this singing. But in each case the songs work a moral revolution, and Pippa goes to bed at night quite unconscious of all she has been the instrument of, singing once more, in the same unconsciousness, before she goes to sleep:

"All service ranks the same with God—
 With God, whose puppets, best and worst,
 Are we; there is no last nor first."

In the higher view, the accident is of course no accident; the word "passes" carries with it one of the subtlest of ironies. In Pippa, therefore, the drama centres; through her it acquires a certain complexity, and from her and her simple actions and interests it derives both its greatest significance and its charm. At the same time, in its separate scenes, the play is also an interesting example of Browning's tendency always to construct his poems, whether dramas or not, out of spiritual crises.

In following this tendency he came to adopt a form which he used persistently and which is almost exclusively associated with his name—the form of the dramatic monologue.

The Dramatic Monologue. The dramatic monologue differs from a soliloquy in assuming the presence of a second person who is addressed or answered or argued with, though one person alone speaks, the speech or action of the other being wholly inferred. Tennyson used something approaching it in his early poems—in the *May Queen*, for instance, and *St. Simeon Stylites*. Landor's prose *Conversations*, too, are at times virtually monologues, since one speaker is such a mere foil that he could easily be suppressed. But Browning worked toward the method independently, and he alone worked it out fully. His *Dramatic Lyrics and Romances*, *Men and Women*, and *Dramatis Personæ* contain a number of such monologues—in each a person revealing his character at some "psychological moment" of his life. *My Last Duchess*, *Andrea del Sarto*, and *The Bishop Orders his Tomb at Saint Praxed's Church* are typical examples, while others, like *James Lee's Wife*, or *Abt Vogler*, are very similar. *The Bishop Orders his Tomb* is a picture of jealousy and the passion for luxury strong in death, for the dying bishop gives minute directions to his sons and nephews for such a rich adornment of his jasper tomb as shall completely outshine his rival's—"Old Gandolf with his paltry onion-

stone." The wonderful thing is the way in which the poet has entered into the character of his subject, a man who has concentrated into his life the color and spirit of Renaissance Italy, from its villas and vineyards to its Greek manuscripts and gorgeous church walls. Or take for a revelation of another kind, the picture of James Lee's faithful wife sitting by the fireside and musing on the wreck that threatens her happiness in the loss of her husband's love:—

"Is all our fire of shipwreck wood,

Oak and pine ?

Oh, for the ills half-understood,

The dim dead woe

Long ago

Befallen this bitter coast of France!

Well, poor sailors took their chance;

I take mine.

"A ruddy shaft our fire must shoot

O'er the sea :

Do sailors eye the casement—mute,

Drenched and stark,

From their bark—

And envy, gnash their teeth for hate

O' the warm safe house and happy freight

—Thee and me ?

"God help you, sailors, at your need !

Spare the curse !

For some ships, safe in port indeed,

Rot and rust,

Run to dust,

All through worms i' the wood, which crept,

Gnawed our hearts out while we slept:

That is worse."

In neither of these instances is the drama wholly individual, and in the latter especially it is imaginatively broadened in its scope to include perhaps most of the tragedy of life.

In *The Ring and the Book* the treatment of a special dramatic situation and the monologue method are together carried

out on an epic scale. On a bookstall in Florence, Browning one day picked up a parchment-covered book which proved to be a full account of a murder and trial that had once taken place in Rome. His fancy was set working until the whole train of events reshaped themselves in his mind. The "ring" is symbolical of the circle of evidence that was forged about the crime, and reforged, goldsmith-wise, in his own brain. The twelve long books of the poem are given to a rehearsal of the same story from different points of view, and of course with different conclusions,—Half-Rome's, the Other Half-Rome's, Guido the husband's, Pompilia the wife and victim's, Caponsacchi the priest's, the Pope's, etc. More in regard to the poem need not here be said, save that it sustains interest and maintains the poetic level remarkably well for so monotonous a scheme. But it shows that Browning was becoming confirmed in his love for psychological analysis and was pushing it perilously close to the further verge of poetic and dramatic possibility. In fact, from the date of this poem onward his work grew less and less emotional, though he never lost the lyric touch which in many a minor poem still served to vary the effect of his more ponderous undertakings.

The reputed obscurity of Browning's verse should not be allowed to deter one from approaching it. So far as the obscurity exists it is partly inseparable from the nature of his themes, however concretely he may present them. Again, the form he adopts, that of the dramatic monologue, leaves large gaps which must be filled by the reader's imagination; and the same thing results from his practice of presenting chiefly dramatic crises. A last difficulty lies in his extreme condensation—that chariness of speech which impelled him to reduce phrases to single compound words and freely to elide pronouns, articles, and conjunctions. But none of these things offer obstructions which an earnest reader will not willingly face and surmount, or even find agreeably stimulative. A more serious objection lies in the frequent

*Obscurity
and
Ruggedness.*

ruggedness of his verse. This does not point to any incapacity. Browning simply does not regard sound in poetry as of sufficient importance to warrant sacrificing to it any desirable shade of sense. If it is a question of a lyric only, he can be as lyrical as another. When other matters press, melody is ignored. This, perhaps, is well. But sometimes the practice seems to be carried to perversity. When we find poems that would actually yield their meaning more readily if they were stripped of their capital letters and printed as prose, something is wrong; for to print normal poetry thus would be to work confusion. Metre and rhyme are not fulfilling their office when to obscure them is to bring illumination. The simple fact is that Browning in a few poems has chosen to rhyme words which do not require and will not bear the enforcement that rhyme always tends to give. Aside from this, through a far more extensive portion of his work we are often made to chafe at ruggedness and dissonance that seem unnecessary, and that surely could have been avoided if the poet had chosen to write less and attach more importance to form.

On the other hand, such of his verse as is lyrical it is difficult not to praise in extravagant language. One thinks, in illustration, of a score of poems—of the *Cavalier Lyric Quality*. *Tunes*, of *How they Brought the Good News*, of *The Last Ride Together*; of the songs in the dramas and elsewhere—"Over the sea our galleys went," "There's a woman like a dew-drop," "Oh, Love—no, Love!" "As I ride, as I ride," "I send my heart up to thee,"—

"I send my heart up to thee, all my heart
In this my singing.

For the stars help me and the sea bears part;
The very night is clinging

Closer to Venice' streets to leave one space

Above me, whence thy face

May light my joyous heart to thee its dwelling-place."

(*In a Gondola.*)

Or one thinks of the blank-verse modulation of that wonderful description of midsummer night near the beginning of *The Ring and the Book*, or of the solemn majesty of the songs of David in *Saul*, or of the impressive chant of the disciples who, in *A Grammarian's Funeral*, carry the dead body of their master up the mountain for burial:—

“Sleep, crop and herd ! sleep, darkling thorpe and croft,
 Safe from the weather !
 He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,
 Singing together,
 He was a man born with thy face and throat,
 Lyric Apollo !
 Long he lived nameless : how should Spring take note
 Winter would follow ?”

In the select choir of England's greatest singers Browning has his place.

The most distinctive place reserved to him, however, is among the inspirers of moral resolution and confidence. His poems are as tonic as wind and sun. This bracing quality is especially to be felt in such a poem as *Resolution and Optimism. Prospice*, with its ringing lines,

“I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
 The best and the last !”—

in *The Statue and the Bust*, with its exhortation,

“Let a man contend to the uttermost
 For his life's set prize, be it what it will !”—

or in the dauntless perseverance that gives a moral significance to the strange story and stranger imagery of *Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came*. It is to be felt also in poems of a very different character—the poems of love and of religious faith. Browning has been regarded as one of the foremost of the modern poets of love. For his high conception of romantic love, of the joy and sanctity of “two hearts beating each to each,” it is sufficient to cite *The Last Ride Together*, or the tender apostrophe to his wife in *The Ring and the Book* (Book I.):

"O lyric Love, half-angel and half-bird,
And all a wonder and a wild desire!"

And love in the largest sense, as a divine principle working through all nature, is at the very centre of Browning's creed. His is the heartiest, hopefullest, most cheering poetic voice that his age has raised. He stands apart from most others of his kind and his age in the positiveness of his religious faith, a faith that is based upon a conviction of the conquering universality of love and self-sacrifice. Two facets of this faith are flashed from the noble poems of *A Death in the Desert* and *Rabbi Ben Ezra*. And the same thing rises almost to defiance in the stanzas of that *Epilogue* which rings out like a triumphant pæan among the half-hearted hopes and quavering prayers of a sceptical generation:

"One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

"No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,
'Strive and thrive!' cry 'Speed,'—fight on, fare ever
There as here!"

Elizabeth Barrett, who was born in Herefordshire in 1806, was the daughter of an English country gentleman, the owner of estates in Jamaica. At the age of fifteen she injured her spine while tightening her pony's saddle-girths and remained an invalid for many years. She had an ardent love of Greek literature, and published, in 1833, a version of Æschylus's *Prometheus Bound*, along with other poems. More important volumes were *The Seraphim* in 1838 and *Poems* in 1844. By the latter she attained a celebrity shared among rising poets perhaps only by Tennyson, for Browning was still but little known. She

Elizabeth
Barrett
Browning,
1806-1861.

herself was not then personally acquainted with the latter, but she knew his poetry, and several lines in her 1844 volume (in *Lady Geraldine's Courtship*) alluding to the "blood-tinctured heart" and "veined humanity" of his *Pomegranates* brought about an acquaintance, which resulted in love, marriage, health, and the happy life in Italy already described. There, after fifteen years, she died, at Florence, in her husband's arms.

Mrs. Browning's poems, like her husband's, are both dramatic and lyric, but the dramatic portion can be ignored. She is pre-eminently an emotional poet, and in that lies her weakness as well as her strength. She had not the serene control of her faculties so essential to the dramatist, who must "see life steadily and see it whole." Nor did she ever acquire the perfect taste and the sense of proportion and repose which her study of Greek should have taught her. Her longest poem, *Aurora Leigh* (1856), a kind of novel in blank verse, but intensely subjective and full of theories about life and art, suffers from these defects. She did better with themes that engaged chiefly her feelings, as in the lyrical effusions of *Cowper's Grave*, *The Dead Pan*, *The Lay of the Brown Rosary*, *The Rhyme of the Duchess May*, or in the poems called forth by her exquisite sensitiveness to human suffering, like *The Cry of the Children* and *Casa Guidi Windows* (1851). The last named was inspired by the Italian struggle for freedom, and takes its title from her Florentine home, where, through the middle years of the century, she was a witness of many moving spectacles that attended the struggle. But time already begins to lay a cold hand upon this work, and it looks now as if only a group of personal poems, the series of sonnets which were written at the time of her courtship, will be cherished by the readers of to-morrow. She did not show these poems to her husband until after their marriage, and she published them disguisedly in 1850 as *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. We know them now for what they are, the intimate record of a sensitive soul under the most ennobling of human experiences; and we are disposed, moreover, to regard them as

among the best sonnets in a literature which has been by no means poor in the kind.

"I thought once how Theocritus had sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for years,
Who each one in a gracious hand appears
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:
And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,
Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,
So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move
Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair;
And a voice said in mastery, while I strove,—
'Guess now who holds thee?' 'Death!' I said. But, there,
The silver answer rang,—'Not Death, but Love.' "

A much more obscure poet in his day, but one who has steadily advanced into that secondary rank to which Mrs.

Browning has as steadily declined, was the shy and somewhat epicurean Edward Fitzgerald, a Cambridge graduate, and a friend of Tennyson, Thackeray, and

Edward
Fitzgerald,
1809-1883.

Carlyle. Fitzgerald was always interested in, and intimate with, the best of literature in many languages, but he kept

himself out of public sight as a retired country gentleman in his Suffolk home, and published nothing until he was past forty. He occupied himself chiefly with translations in the form of free paraphrase, producing thus in 1856 *Six Dramas of Calderon*, and some years later versions, or "per-versions," as he modestly called them, of the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus and the two *Œdipus* tragedies of Sophocles. These are of considerable merit, and together with the delightfully original letters published since his death, would give him a very respectable place in literature. But he has won a much higher place, not only of honor but of wide influence, with another of his unambitious paraphrases, the now universally known *Rubáiyát*, of the Persian poet and astronomer, Omar Khayyám. These *rubáiyát*,

or quatrains, were published in 1859, surviving unnoticed on the bookstalls until Rossetti and Swinburne discovered and proclaimed their merits. Their influence upon poets was immediate: Mr. Swinburne, for instance, employed their novel Oriental verse-form in his *Laus Veneris*, and it is possible that Tennyson himself had learned of the rhyme-scheme through Fitzgerald, since Tennyson was ringing changes upon it with classical metres in the early fifties. The public came to heel more slowly, but very enthusiastically when it did come, and there has been a deluge of Omar versions since. But they have served only to fix more impregnably in the first place this early paraphrase, in which, by judicious selection, combination, and, above all, true poetic imagination, Fitzgerald imbued with his own unique genius the strangely unjoyous live-for-the-present philosophy of the Persian fatalist.

"Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing."

"Alas, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented Manuscript should close!
The Nightingale that in the Branches sang,
Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who knows!"

Moving forward a decade we come to the name of one who, with Tennyson and Browning, makes up the trio of great poets of the middle Victorian period. The life of Matthew Arnold was wholly academic and uneventful, though, as we shall see, there was not a little stress within—stress, indeed, from which he might have been saved had there been more excitement without. He was the son of Dr. Thomas Arnold, the great educational reformer and headmaster of Rugby who has been so admirably portrayed in Thomas Hughes's *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. His own education was obtained at Rugby and at Oxford—Oxford, which, in his life-long submission to her charm, he characterized as

*Matthew
Arnold,
1822-1888.*

"so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene!" Most of his life was spent as an inspector of schools, much of it in the patient drudgery of reading examination papers. He held the Chair of Poetry at Oxford from 1857 to 1867. Besides travelling much on the continent, he visited America twice, in 1883-4 and 1886, lecturing extensively on the former occasion. As a man he was extremely genial and urbane, but with an affected manner that caused him to be often misunderstood by those who did not know him well.

Arnold's prose, which is critical and not creative and which belongs wholly to the latter part of his life, will be more properly treated in another chapter. His poetry was mostly the work of his earlier years. A small volume, *The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems*, appeared in 1849. *Empedocles on Etna*, a philosophical poem in semi-dramatic form, was published in 1852 and almost immediately withdrawn. Two series of collected *Poems* appeared in 1853 and 1855, the former containing *Sohrab and Rustum*, *The Scholar-Gipsy*, etc., and a volume of *New Poems* (*Thyrsis*, etc.) in 1867. This almost completes the account, which in its meagreness and in the short period of its production, as well as in its character, stands in strong contrast to the rich and prolonged fruitage of Arnold's two great contemporaries.

At a first glance, indeed, Arnold's poetry may well seem not only meagre in amount, but narrow in scope, monotonous, and even forbidding. But closer scrutiny will discover
His Lyric and Elegiac Verse. a considerable richness and variety. It is commonly assumed that he had an indifferent ear for metre.

As a matter of fact he deliberately set himself against the excessive mellifluousness which characterizes much of Tennyson's verse. He constantly experimented with irregular choral measures, often unrhymed or but slightly softened by assonance. In most of these experiments it cannot be held

that he succeeded, though an occasional improvisation like *Philomela* may seem satisfying:

“Hark! ah, the nightingale—
The tawny-throated!
Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a burst!
What triumph! hark!—what pain!”

In certain severer poems, too, such as *Heine's Grave*, or *Rugby Chapel* (written in commemoration of his father), the ruggedness of the form is so far redeemed by the intense sincerity of the substance that it cannot be felt to be unfitting. On the other hand sometimes a genuine and irresistible lyric strain creeps in with rhyme, and we get the wavelike, melancholy movement of *Dover Beach* or the haunting melody of *The Forsaken Mer-man*. It is strange that this last poem should take us back to a snatch of song in one of Dryden's operas,—

“Old father Ocean calls my tide;
Come away! come away!”

but so it is. Of this whole poem, indeed, which appeared in his earliest volume, there is much more to be said than that it is rarely lyrical. Not only is it filled with the sounds and scents of the ocean beaches, and with pictures as sharp or as soft as sunlight and sea-air or moon-light can make them—of the “white-wall'd town” and the “little grey church on the windy hill” and the “heaths starr'd with broom”; not only does it throb and cry with human love and anguish; but it would be hard to point to another poem in literature in which the imagination has penetrated so far beyond the merely earthly and human into a realm and life that are not of either. The merman, whom a creature of earth, Margaret, has forsaken at the call of the Easter bells, follows her from his sand-strewn caverns into the town, climbs on the gravestones outside the church, and through the small leaded panes beholds her with her eyes sealed to a book, while “loud prays the priest, shut stands the door.” Love he can understand, but not this

love, this human hunger for the unseen and the infinite, and in pathetic bewilderment he takes his children back with him, singing,

"There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she!
She left lonely forever
The kings of the sea."

In the combination of melody, dramatic sympathy, and poetic imagination, Arnold never went further than this.

Several other poems should be mentioned in this connection. One is his exceptionally fine sonnet on *Shakespeare*. Another is *Requiescat*, a dirge in four simple, effortless quatrains, which belongs in that choice anthology of perfect little lyrics where Landor's *Rose Aylmer* and Tennyson's *Break, Break, Break* hold each a place. Still others, to pass over a dozen almost equally meritorious—*Isolation*, for instance—are the two complementary poems of *The Scholar-Gipsy* and *Thyrsis*. Both of these are pastoral in character, written in rather long, intricately rhymed, ode-like stanzas, and owe their peculiar charm to a rare combination of the classical atmosphere with thoroughly English local color and modern feeling. The second is an elegy in memory of Arnold's friend, the poet Arthur Hugh Clough, and as such may not undeservedly be compared with Milton's *Lycidas* and Shelley's *Adonais*.

In contrast with these lyrical poems are several experiments which Arnold made in the composition of fragmentary epics after the stately and severely simple style of Homer. "*Sohrab and Rustum*." In *Sohrab and Rustum* he reproduced an episode from the Persian *Shah Nameh*, or "Book of Kings;" "*Balder Dead*" is taken from Norse mythology. There can scarcely be any question that in the former, notwithstanding the hazardous nature of the undertaking, Arnold produced a great, possibly his greatest, poem. The subject is one fraught with high poetic possibility, namely, the tie of affection between man and man, in this case between father and son.

There is hardly any adornment beyond an occasional formal simile in the classical mode. The blank verse moves, in a dignified manner indeed, but at times almost haltingly. But from this very plainness the tragic tale gathers majesty and strength; and insensible must be the reader who does not feel at the end, as Rustum is left sitting by the body of his dead son, that this is such poetry as purges the passions.

"And night came down over the solemn waste,
And the two gazing hosts, and that sole pair,
And darken'd all; and a cold fog, with night
Crept from the Oxus. Soon a hum arose,
As of a great assembly loosed, and fires
Began to twinkle through the fog; for now
Both armies moved to camp, and took their meal;
The Persians took it on the open sands
Southward, the Tartars by the river marge;
And Rustum and his son were left alone."

Then, as the tranquil conclusion goes on and in a few simple lines translates the almost intolerable individual tragedy into a symbol of universal significance, the tears that threatened subside again as insensibly as they rose.

While one is disposed to look among the foregoing poems for Arnold's greatest and enduring work, the special thing that distinguishes him among his contemporaries and shows the particular relation in which he stood to the age has not yet been mentioned. His own advent at Oxford was a little later than that Tractarian Movement toward High Church principles which so stirred the religious and intellectual life there in the later thirties. But he felt, as those who were active in that movement did, the severe shock which Christian faith was experiencing from the assaults of both philosophy and science. For himself he never espoused either side very openly, and it is not possible to determine just what were his inmost beliefs. But it is pretty clear that he shared, intellectually, in the rationalism of the more

*A Reflective
Poet; Religious Unrest.*

liberal thinkers, while his heart still yearned for the unquestioning faith of an earlier day. Thus he found himself

“Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born.”

Much of this unrest was voiced in his early poetry, wherein are constantly recurrent notes of “the something that infects the world,” and distressed outcries against

“this strange disease of modern life
With its sick hurry, its divided aims.”

He looked, for an ideal, back to the Greek Sophocles, “who saw life steadily and saw it whole,” or to Goethe, “Europe’s sagest head.” Or he turned to the reflective Wordsworth, his special idol and guide, who had more influence than any other upon his life and work. But critic though he was, he lacked Goethe’s clearness of sight and Wordsworth’s absolute faith. He could only take refuge in resignation and a kind of Stoic calm. The most that Nature could teach him was “to bear rather than rejoice.” At the same time, he is to be given credit for an unshaken resolution to accept life even on the barest terms which reason will allow, and, in spite of all doubt or despondency, to make it moral.

“We cannot kindle when we will
The fire which in the heart resides
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides.
But tasks in hours of insight will’d
Can be through hours of gloom fulfill’d.”

In such poems, then, as this poem of *Morality*, in *Self-Dependence*, in *The Future*, while we find Arnold the voice of perhaps the least hopeful part of his generation—an inevitable product, it would seem, of an age of transition in thought and belief—we find him at the same time a voice of no little moral strength and encouragement, confident in his declaration of the abiding value of duty and right conduct. Abandoning the message of

his poetry and recurring to the literary point of view, one notes that however austere may be his Muse, however sternly reflective and ethical his verse, it is always, like his own religio-moral spirit, "touched with emotion," and touched so genuinely and deeply that there is never any question of its right to be called poetry. He breathes always in the rarefied atmosphere of the Olympian summits.

Only one other poet of the middle years of the century can possibly bear mention with the high names that have thus

Arthur
Hugh
Clough,
1819-1861.

far engaged our attention, and that is Arthur

Hugh Clough, an intimate friend of Arnold. Clough was a pupil at Rugby; and going from there to

Oxford somewhat earlier than Arnold, he came into more direct contact with the religious ferment of

the place and time, with the result that his whole intellectual activity became engrossed in the problem of adjusting life to the new conditions of thought and belief. His poems belong mostly to the period between 1848 (a few were written before then) and his death in Florence thirteen years later. His general attitude was much the same as Arnold's, but more curiously inquiring, or sceptical, if one prefer that term, and he was rather less disposed to trust the motions of the spirit that "bloweth and is still."

"But play no tricks upon thy soul, O man;
Let fact be fact, and life the thing it can."

Dipsychus, in which these lines occur, is an unfinished life-drama. *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* is a "vacation pastoral" in dactylic hexameters that quite fail of the smoothness of their model, Longfellow's *Evangeline*. *Amours de Voyage* is a story in the form of rhymed epistles. All attack in one way or another the problem of social and individual life under the actual conditions with which Clough and his generation were surrounded. Better poetry on the whole is to be found in a few of his shorter poems such as *Qua Cursum Ventus, Qui Laborat*

Orat, Say not the Struggle Naught Availeth, and *Ite Domum Saturæ, Venit Hesperus*. The last named, a simple little country idyl, happily conceived and delicately phrased and modulated, might well, under a more felicitous title, attain to the rank of a minor classic. But in general, between the formal deficiencies of his more substantive poems, and the reflective cast of the more lyrical trifles, Clough has not found the acceptance which was so freely prophesied for him. Literary history may remember him for his faithful expression of certain marked tendencies of the middle decade of the century when he wrote, but Arnold has given an equally faithful expression and a much more consistently poetic one; and it is in Arnold's *Thyrsis* that Clough himself is likely to find his securest fame.

CHAPTER XIX

THE VICTORIAN NOVEL

DICKENS THACKERAY CHARLOTTE BRONTË GEORGE ELIOT

Two tendencies, sometimes mingling in the work of one and the same novelist, marked the fiction of the Victorian age. The first was due to the lingering influence of Scott, through whom a tinge of romanticism was imparted to much of the fiction which succeeded; the model, moreover, of Scott's historical novels continued to exercise a strong fascination. On the other hand, there was a much stronger tendency to revert to the methods of the eighteenth-century realists. Jane Austen has already been noted as maintaining the methods of those realists quite up to the time of Scott's earliest triumphs, and a very few years after his death the same methods, never entirely neglected, became again the controlling ones. The chief difference is to be sought in the broadened scope of the later novel, which is largely due to the new and more complicated social conditions under which it was produced. Some of these conditions have been set forth in the preceding chapter on poetry; others will be discovered in connection with the discussion of the particular novelists and novels to follow.

Mention of two names may serve to bridge the slight gap in years between the later Waverley Novels and the first of the
Disraeli, Sketches by "Boz." These are Benjamin Disraeli,
1804-1881. Lord Beaconsfield, and Edward Bulwer, the first Lord
Bulwer- Lytton. Both began writing, like the poets of the
Lytton, time, under the all-powerful influence of Lord Byron's
1803-1873. popularity, producing thrilling "fashionable" stories of high-born heroes, who were cynical, it might be, or worldly, to the last degree. Disraeli even put the story of Byron's own

life into his *Venetia* (1837). But with all its romantic color their fiction was mainly social, and the word "novel" is in general the better name for it. The two writers were much alike in versatility, cleverness, extravagance of sentiment and style, and a showy but somewhat insincere philosophy. The first of Disraeli's dozen novels, *Vivian Grey*, was published in 1826. On the strength of a quickly won popularity he was a great literary lion in London in the early thirties. The middle and later parts of his life, during which he was a leader in the House of Commons and several times Prime Minister, were spent in politics; and his three best works are political novels of his middle period—*Coningsby* (1844), *Sybil* (1845), and *Tancred* (1847). Bulwer-Lytton also was a politician and member of Parliament, and he maintained a still wider and more enduring popularity, dazzling the reading public with his kaleidoscopic novel-romances as he dazzled British society with his finger-rings and shirt-frills and "looking-glass boots." *Falkland* appeared in 1827, *Pelham* in 1828. The list that followed is longer than that of any other British novelist equally famous, and he also wrote some poems, and several very successful plays—*The Lady of Lyons* (1838), for instance, and *Richelieu* (1839). The novels are of almost every variety. There are even several romances of "Gothic" mystery and terror, like *Zanoni* (1842) and *A Strange Story* (1862). There are novels of sentiment, or rather of sentimentalism, Lytton's best work in this kind being *Eugene Aram* (1832) and *Ernest Maltravers* (1837). There are historical romances too, among which *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834), still almost universally known, is apparently his most vital work. *The Last of the Barons* (1843) and *Harold* (1848) deal with English history, the former with that critical period in the Wars of the Roses when the downfall of Warwick and the downfall of feudalism went hand in hand. All these works are in some measure romances; but after the vogue of purely realistic fiction was revived by his junior contemporaries, Lytton turned to that and produced with equal ease

and success *The Caxtons* (1849) and *My Novel* (1853). It would be idle to deny that genius of a very unusual sort went to the production of such a bulk and variety of interesting and to some extent instructive work. At the same time, it is certain that Lytton lacked the higher qualities of genius, while his showy cleverness and a certain hollowness and superficial grandiloquence may be ranked as positive faults. It is not likely therefore that he will ever again be ranked with the really great creators of Victorian fiction.

Among those great creators the first two in the order of time, and probably in nearly every order of merit are Charles Dickens and William Makepeace Thackeray. Dickens's life began in unpromising obscurity, on an island of the south coast where his father was a poor government clerk. The family moved to Chatham, and thence to London, when Charles was nine years of age. The father was almost continually in debt and the boy became early familiar with the inner workings of debtors' prisons as well as with pawnshops and various unpleasant processes of law. His first employment was as wrapper of parcels in a blacking warehouse, a fact about which, through most of his life, somewhat unworthily he kept a shamed silence. Then he contrived to get a little schooling, learned shorthand, and worked his way to a position as reporter for the *Morning Chronicle*. The work was hard—Dickens always worked hard—but the knowledge of life and human nature which he obtained reporting debates in the House of Commons, riding over the country in all weathers to report election speeches, prowling about London on all sorts of "details," proved invaluable in his later career. His powers of observation were extraordinarily keen, and he naturally turned them to account in his first literary writing. *Sketches by Boz* were descriptive and humorous papers contributed to the journals and reprinted in two volumes in 1835 and 1836. In the latter year he began some sketches, intended to accompany a series of

Charles
Dickens,
1812-1870.

sporting plates by a caricaturist, which rapidly developed into the *Pickwick Papers* that made his fame. Once Mr. Pickwick and his Club and the merry, impudent, irresistible Sam Weller had established themselves in town, Dickens ceased to report for the newspapers and began to report for the wider public out of his own creative imagination. It is not necessary to name the score or more of long novels and shorter stories that flowed from his fertile pen. Everybody read them and laughed and cried over them, and the poor reporter rose to the splendor of colored velvet waistcoats and the dignity of some intimacy with the London artistic and fashionable world. While still under thirty he was by far the most popular writer of his day. He travelled to Edinburgh, Italy, and America. For America he conceived a strong dislike, which he did not hesitate to express (see his *American Notes*, 1842); but he returned thither again in 1867 and gave public readings from his works, as he had done at home—with extraordinary success, too, for he had a genuine actor's talent. In 1856 he purchased Gad's Hill Place, in Kent, realizing thus a dream of his poverty-stricken boyhood, and there in June, 1870, he suddenly died, of overwork and nervous exhaustion. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Fiction of the popular, human sort like that of Dickens does not lend itself to the same kind of criticism as do the creations of a colder art. For those who do not know, as for those who do, the characters of Paul Dombey, Oliver Twist, David Copperfield, Peggotty, Agnes, Dora, Little Nell, the ever interesting Micawber and Dick Swiveller, the disreputable Sairey Gamp, the ruffianly Bill Sikes, the hypocritical Pecksniff, description avails but little. Their acquaintance must be made in the novels themselves, and when these have been read and enjoyed the novelist's primary purpose has been served. Yet a few of the books call for special comment, and a further summary of the writer's methods and tendencies will serve to set his work in a clearer

*A Human-
itarian
Novelist.*

light. For to say that Dickens's purpose was to entertain the public, is not to tell quite the whole of the tale. While the *Pickwick Papers* were making all London laugh, Dickens began his first long, coherent novel, *Oliver Twist*, and he deliberately made it as tragic as those papers were comic. The novel was written, as he afterward avowed, with the serious purpose of showing forth poverty and vice as they really were,



"OLD CURIOSITY SHOP."

without any trappings of gaudy romance. He would not "abate one hole in the Dodger's coat nor one scrap of curl-paper in the girl's dishevelled hair." In this spirit therefore he portrayed (not without some satire upon the Poor Laws) the nefariously managed workhouse in which Oliver was born and so wofully underfed, and the "foul and frowsy" dens of thievery and vice into which fate later led the poor waif, in the conviction that to reveal these things thus, however depressing the sordid revelation might be, was to do a service to society. No doubt it was, though it is difficult to estimate the precise amount of service done. It was

at least good to counteract the effect of such sentimental criminal novels as Lytton's *Eugene Aram*. Dickens made several attempts of this kind. In *Nicholas Nickleby*, Mr. Squeers's notorious Dotheboys Hall is a manifest satire upon private schools conducted solely for private gain; while in *Bleak House*, the needless prolonging of suits in Chancery comes in for exposure. *Old Curiosity Shop* and *Little Dorrit*, the latter with its scenes in a debtor's prison, may be placed in a similar category. Taken together, they illustrate what may be called the humanitarian novel, a distinct development of the middle of the nineteenth century, in which a sentimentalist like Dickens was eminently fitted to lead, with Reade and Kingsley as good seconds.

Twice Dickens tried the historical novel, in *Barnaby Rudge* and *A Tale of Two Cities*. The latter is a highly dramatic story of the French Revolution, reminding one in its terrible vividness of Carlyle's graphic pictures of the same deluge of blood. He also wrote novels with an ethical purpose; *Martin Chuzzlewit* might be singled out as a kind of sermon upon selfishness, *Dombey and Son* as one upon pride, and the *Christmas Books* as one upon charity. But it is scarcely wise to study these in this light, nor should it be supposed that their value is determined by such considerations. If we go back at once to the fundamental qualities of the novels as such, their power to please and to move, we should probably decide that Dickens's greatest works are, for the uncritical reader, *Dombey and Son*, for the critical, *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Great Expectations*, and for both, the *Pickwick Papers* (though they are scarcely a novel), *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *David Copperfield*. The last, we know now, is really the disguised story of Dickens's own life, and therein lies the secret of its greatness. "No one can ever believe this Narrative, in the reading," he declared, "more than I have believed it in the writing;" and, "Of all my books I like this the best." Thus we can understand how it should be so truthful and convincing, so harmonious in tone, so full of memorable scenes and lovable characters, above all so sympathetic in its delineations of what

always engaged Dickens's closest interest, the joys and sorrows of childhood.

It is easy to name the qualities of Dickens's genius, so salient are they and so omnipresent. A wonderful vigor, a faculty for graphic description which runs parallel with his minute observation, sympathies that are always tenderly alive, a keen sense of humor, a keen sense of pathos, a fertile imagination, and a facile style,—thus, perhaps, we may sum them up. It is likewise easy to point out his faults, since they are chiefly the defects of his qualities. He grows tedious to a reader who is more easily wearied than himself; his humor is sometimes too broadly comic; his pathos is often sentimentally overcharged; his imagination knows no bounds. The tendency to that sentimentality which is constantly shedding tears of joy and which loves to linger over deathbed scenes was a tendency of the time, but that is not much excuse for a writer who so manifestly encouraged the tendency as Dickens did. This weakness, however, affects only particular scenes. A more radical defect is the exaggeration and distortion which mark nearly everything that came from his hands. It is the riotous imagination that will not be curbed. Watch it in its most trivial working. When our attention is called to the exceedingly animated and alert character of Mr. William Swidger, we are told that his "very trousers hitched themselves up at the ankles." Peggotty's cheeks and arms are so hard and red, says David Copperfield, that "I wondered why the birds didn't peck her in preference to apples," and her rough forefinger "I once associated with a pocket nutmeg-grater." It is this practice that seems to label almost every creation of Dickens with the legend "Grotesque"—that makes us say of his characters that they are mainly caricatures, and of his scenes that they are realistic but never quite real. He presents to us Truth in the mask of Harlequin. It is not probable that Dickens ever could have learned to draw character subtly. He did not deal with subtle characters, but kept mainly to that humble life that does not tend to cultivate refinements

of distinction. Moreover, his method is the very obvious one of fixing upon a peculiarity and making the most of it. The peculiarity may be a mere trick of speech; it may be something that can be suggested in the character's name; but whatever it is, the character advertises the reader of it promptly and persistently. Uriah Heep is always professing his humbleness, Micawber always waiting for something to turn up, while Pecksniff manifests in every word and deed his ingrained hypocrisy. It is much the same thing, though with more of human reality, that Ben Jonson and his tribe put on the stage as "humours."

Yet it is very certain that the world of Dickens would not be quite the delightful world it is if these admitted blemishes were away. They seem indeed to be root and trunk of the man's genius, not branches that will bear lopping. The same thing is true of the mannerisms of his style and particularly the mannerism of unlimited repetition, which, like the rest, springs almost inevitably from the exuberance of his imagination. Always, indeed, we come back to this; and shall we not say that his abounding humanity and his exhaustless imagination are the two gifts which made Dickens at once beloved and great? They are easy to illustrate, since almost every page tingles with the overflowing vitality of the man. Take first, for humanity, this homely picture from *A Christmas Carol*:

"You never in all your life saw anything like Trotty after this. I don't care where you have lived or what you have seen; you never in all your life saw anything at all approaching him! He sat down in his chair and beat his knees and cried; he sat down in his chair and beat his knees and laughed; he sat down in his chair and beat his knees and laughed and cried together; he got out of his chair and hugged Meg; he got out of his chair and hugged Richard; he got out of his chair and hugged them both at once; he kept running up to Meg, and squeezing her fresh face between his hands and kissing it, going from her backwards not to lose sight of it, and running up again like a figure in a magic lantern; and whatever he did, he was constantly sitting himself down in his chair, and never stopping in it for one single moment; being—that's the truth—beside himself with joy."

Then take, for imagination, this from *A Tale of Two Cities*:

"It was a heavy mass of building, that château of Monsieur the Marquis, with a large stone court-yard before it, and two stone sweeps of staircase meeting in a stone terrace before the principal door. A stony business altogether, with heavy stone balustrades, and stone urns, and stone flowers, and stone faces of men, and stone heads of lions, in all directions. As if the Gorgon's head had surveyed it, when it was finished, two centuries ago."

How the stony indifference to suffering into which the aristocracy of Europe had hardened has crept into the simple realism of this description, giving it a touch even of moral grandeur! Read also in the same tale such chapters as "Echoing Footsteps," "The Sea Still Rises," "Fire Rises,"—read them aloud and rapidly to catch the full rhythm of the sentences with their stress of feeling beneath, and admire the extent of the author's rhetorical power. It is these powers of sympathy, imagination, and style, present to a greater or less degree in a thousand chapters and passages, that give to Dickens's genius a character for which height or depth may not often be the word, but breadth invariably is. People cross his pages in families, in schools, in mobs, each with some individuality of his own; and into the creation of each has gone the author's love or pity with a spirit that is childlike in its abandonment. If there was a limit to the freshness and fertility of his creative powers, the pen at work upon *Edwin Drood* dropped from his hand in the Swiss chalet at Gad's Hill without having given any sign of it.

William Makepeace Thackeray, now Dickens's yoke-fellow in literary history, sustained toward him and his work a relation similar in several respects to that which Browning held toward Tennyson. He was later than Dickens in coming to fame, and his popularity never spread so widely among all classes, perhaps scarcely reaching the humbler classes at all.

At the same time he possessed a certain depth and solidity of genius which Dickens did not. He was born at Calcutta, India,

*William
Makepeace
Thackeray,
1811-1863.*

where his father was in the Civil Service. Upon his father's death, he was taken, at the age of five, to England. He was sent to Charterhouse School (the "Grey Friars" of *The Newcomes*), and proceeded thence to Trinity College, Cambridge (the "Oxbridge" of *Pendennis*) in the year in which Tennyson won the Chancellor's medal with the poem, *Timbuctoo*. Thackeray, it is remembered, wrote a burlesque poem upon the same subject. He had a real talent for poetry which later yielded so excellent a medley of sentiment and pathos as the *Ballad of Bowllabaisse*. He left Cambridge without taking a degree, and sought a more worldly education in travel on the continent. When, at twenty-one, he came into his fortune, he embarked it in several disastrous enterprises, one of which was newspapers and another gaming, and he speedily found himself face to face with the wolf. Having a little skill at drawing he went to Paris with the idea of becoming a professional artist, but became a professional newspaper correspondent instead. His marriage proved another misfortune, for his wife's mind failing, he was obliged to part from her. He naturally turned for solace to the Club-world of London, and there he came to be a familiar figure, a Bohemian, one may say, of the very best type.

All this time, with Dickens in the full tide of success, Thackeray was only a struggling "contributor" to *Fraser's* and *Punch*, writing various sketches, such as *The Yellowplush Papers* (1837), over an assumed name. Even the tale of *Barry Lyndon* (1844), the lively autobiography of an Irish rogue, failed to attract attention toward him. But in 1848, when he was well past thirty-five, appeared the *Book of Snobs* and the great novel of *Vanity Fair*, and Dickens's rival was fairly in the field. The renown which was scarcely hoped for, certainly little expected, came, and fortune with it. The other novels followed almost as a matter of course—*Pendennis* (1849-50), *Henry Esmond* (1852), *The Newcomes* (1854-55), and *The Virginians* (1858-59). In 1851 he went upon the public lecture

platform. This was before Dickens began his readings; and he anticipated Dickens also in repeating his success—for he was highly successful—in the United States. The subjects of his lectures were *The English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century* and *The Four Georges*, published respectively in 1853 and 1861. In 1860 he assumed the editorship of the newly launched *Cornhill Magazine*, but did not retain it long. He died suddenly on Christmas Eve, 1863, leaving as Dickens did seven years later, an unfinished novel.

Of Thackeray's five long novels, the last written is of the least importance, though it maintains a place of interest as a sequel to *Esmond*. *The Newcomes*, too, though *The Novels*. sometimes regarded as the very greatest among novels of manners, probably has its surest hold on the affections through one character, the noble, lovable, and one may trust, immortal Colonel Newcome. In the creation of character, indeed, Thackeray has no equal among English novelists; he is named with Balzac and Shakespeare. But there are other things besides the creation of character to support his three greatest books. *Vanity Fair*, so significantly named, is a masterpiece of satire and realism. As such it abjures heroics; Waterloo, Wellington, and "Bonaparty" appear for a time in the background, but too dimly to make an exception. It is an unvarnished story of life in the sordid upper middle-class world, with the scheming, unprincipled Becky Sharp for unheroic protagonist. Very naturally, the book was not regarded as edifying, though it was an excellent antidote for a good deal of current Bulwerism. *Pendennis* is also a novel without a hero other than the bad-and-good Pen himself. Though not greater than *Vanity Fair*, it is quite as good in its way, for Thackeray put into it much of his own life and character, a fact which carried a certain warranty of truth. *Esmond*, however, if one may dare to choose, is the great book—in style, in harmony of form and matter, in subjection of the satirist and sermonizer to the creator and artist, in characters, in richness of

historical background, in almost everything. It is the most realistic of historical novels. In it, again, the author has dramatically identified himself with his hero, but this time wholly in imagination, not in any autobiographical sense. The scene he has placed in the days of Queen Anne, with Dick Steele (one may be sure it would be Steele and not Addison) as one of Esmond's friends, and the great Marlborough of the continental campaigns as Esmond's unworshipful general. Then, with an almost perfect assimilation of the style of the *Spectator* and in a delightful compromise between the first and third persons, the reader is led, fascinated, through the story of Esmond's hopeless infatuation and unselfish sacrifice, and of his mistress the Lady Castlewood's sadly divided devotion, and of Beatrix's utter but not quite unforgivable hardness of heart. From first to last, through Esmond's boyhood and manhood alike, it is a story that could not be better told.

The qualities of Thackeray are not so striking as those of Dickens, but they are none the less pervasive, and no estimate of his work is possible that does not take into account his personality. In a sense, he is more objective than the author of *David Copperfield*. He keeps at arm's length the characters that Dickens would embrace; he will not spare even Pendennis or Esmond for their crying. Yet he is forever taking the reader parenthetically into his confidence and evincing for him a sympathy which he refuses to his creations. It is thus that he holds the curious position of detachment from his story proper though never of detachment from his work. Detachment seems to be a condition of the highest success in creative fiction,—while some revelation of the creator's personality is certainly a condition of winning the reader's love. Thackeray, more by ingenuousness than by ingenuity, meets both conditions. He stands apart while the play goes on, and shifts the scenes, turning up the lights and turning them down, and even comes before the curtain between

*Realist and
Humanist.*

acts to lecture. But never, after all, was there a scene-shifter or proscenium lecturer who watched more intently the progress of the play. It has for him the fascination of life—it is life—and the spectator must share the fascination with him.

Yet the spectators of Thackeray's little dramas at first strangely misunderstood him. They said he was satirical, which he certainly was, and cynical, which he was not, at least not as they thought him, and misanthropic, which he was not at all. He did not picture for them the extravagant heroes, good and bad, which they so much wanted. He let men and women who were utterly foolish, frivolous, or vain, move about in society, instead of making them deep-dyed, out-and-out villains, obvious targets for the moralists. Or he took people of a better sort and pried into their characters until he found all kinds of faults and weaknesses, and then allowed other people, good people too, to love them and marry them. His readers—the more discriminating, of course, always excepted—did not realize that he was simply holding up the mirror, showing them to themselves exactly as they were. It is not cynicism to know that this is a mad world, and to say it; it is simply wholesome satire. Thackeray was a man of the world, with a deep knowledge, born of experience, of what strangely composite creatures we are who move through laughter and tears to a common grave. Such a man will not love exactly as the unsophisticated do, in maudlin sentiment or foolish hero-worship, but if love be in him at all he will love most wisely and humanly. Such love was in Thackeray. We are struck by the admirable art which allows its best characters to go to such lengths of weakness and folly and yet saves them at the last—which allows the author himself to ridicule and rail as one who stands on the verge of utter cynicism and misanthropy, and yet saves himself. But it is more than art; for doubt and deride as he would, Thackeray could only love after all.

The evidences of these things are at hand. In the preface to *Pendennis*, Thackeray put his purpose very plainly. "Since

the author of *Tom Jones* was buried, no writer of fiction among us has been permitted to depict to his utmost power a *Man*. We must drape him, and give him a certain conventional simper. Society will not tolerate the Natural in our art." And he cast up to his readers their insincerity and ostrich-like self-delusion. "You will not hear—it is best to know it—what moves in the real world." He was resolved they should hear it; and so he told them such blunt truths as that "the elder of Esmond's two kinswomen pardoned the younger her beauty when that had lost some of its freshness, perhaps," or that "'tis strange what a man may do and a woman yet think him an angel." He painted such terrible pictures as the old Baroness Bernstein of *The Virginians*, the creature into whom, with the inevitableness of fate, time transmuted the lovely, worldly Beatrix of *Esmond*. He allowed Esmond himself to rail on this wise:

"I have seen too much of success in life to take off my hat and huzzah to it as it passes in its gilt coach; and would do my little part with my neighbours on foot, that they should not gape with too much wonder, nor applaud too loudly. Is it the Lord Mayor going in state to mince-pies and the Mansion House? Is it poor Jack of Newgate's procession, with the sheriff and javelin-men conducting him on his last journey to Tyburn? I look into my heart and think that I am as good as my Lord Mayor, and know I am as bad as Tyburn Jack. Give me a chain and red gown and a pudding before me, and I could play the part of Alderman very well, and sentence Jack after dinner. Starve me, keep me from books and honest people, educate me to love dice, gin, and pleasure, and put me on Hounslow Heath, with a purse before me, and I will take it. 'And I shall be deservedly hanged,' say you, wishing to put an end to this prosing. I don't say No. I can't but accept the world as I find it, including a rope's end, as long as it is in fashion."

This may sound like cynicism. Yet watch again the better nature struggling through. While he was upon the composition of *Pendennis*, Thackeray met a woman who seemed to him like Blanche Amory. "We talked and persiflated all the way to London," he wrote to a friend, "and the idea of her will help me to a good

chapter, in which I will make Pendennis and Blanche play at being in love, such a false humbugging London love as two *blasé* London people might act, and half deceive themselves that they were in earnest. That will complete the cycle of Mr. Pen's worldly experiences, and then we will make, or try and make a good man of him. O ! me, we are wicked worldlings most of us, may God better us, and cleanse us !" Then read the beautiful scene where Esmond returns to the Lady Castlewood after his first campaign, and ask whether it could have been written by any man whose heart was not filled with charity:—

"She smiled an almost wild smile as she looked up at him. The moon was up by this time, glittering keen in the frosty sky. He could see, for the first time now clearly, her sweet careworn face.

"Do you know what day it is?" she continued. "It is the 29th of December—it is your birthday! But last year we did not drink it—no, no. My Lord was cold, and my Harry was likely to die: and my brain was in fever; and we had no wine. But now—now you are come again, bringing your sheaves with you, my dear." She burst into a wild flood of weeping as she spoke; she laughed and sobbed on the young man's heart, crying out wildly, "bringing your sheaves with you—your sheaves with you!"

As he had sometimes felt, gazing up from the deck at midnight into the boundless starlit depths overhead, in a rapture of devout wonder at that endless brightness and beauty—in some such a way now, the depth of this pure devotion (which was, for the first time, revealed to him) quite smote upon him, and filled his heart with thanksgiving. Gracious God, who was he, weak and friendless creature, that such a love should be poured out upon him? Not in vain—not in vain has he lived—hard and thankless should he be to think so—that has such a treasure given him. What is ambition compared to that, but selfish vanity? To be rich, to be famous? What do these profit a year hence, when other names sound louder than yours, when you lie hidden away under the ground, along with idle titles engraven on your coffin? But only true love lives after you—follows your memory with secret blessing—or precedes you, and intercedes for you. *Non omnis moriar*—if dying, I yet live in a tender heart or two; nor am lost and hopeless living, if a sainted departed soul still loves and prays for me."

Thackeray said that he quarrelled with Dickens's art "a thou-

sand and a thousand times," but he had only praise for the generosity of his rival's spirit. And certainly, in the generosity of his own spirit, Thackeray, the severe satirist, scarcely less than Dickens, the indulgent sentimentalist, has contributed to enlarge the office of sympathy and strengthen the ties of human love. In this direction, though by very different paths, the two writers have reached virtually one goal.

It is convenient, though scarcely fair to their own virility, to think of Charles Reade and Anthony Trollope as satellites, respectively, of the two great luminaries just treated. Reade was a London barrister, who, like Dickens, had a fondness for the stage. He began by writing plays, but his first popular success was made with a novel of stage life into which he turned one of his plays, *Peg Woffington* (1852). His three most important books are *It's Never too Late to Mend* (1856), *The Cloister and the Hearth* (1861), and *Griffith Gaunt* (1866). The first is a social novel, like certain of Dickens's, exposing abuses in the management of prisons and convict labor. The second is an admirable historical romance of the Renaissance in the time of Erasmus's childhood. The third has its central interest in moral delinquency and the marriage problem. Reade worked mostly from "documents" of all sorts, which he collected assiduously but used with great freedom. He handled human passions and deeds without gloves. With a marked vein of sentiment, with a tendency to exaggerate, and a leaning toward romance through all his realism, he falls very clearly into the class which Dickens led. Trollope stands rather on the side of Thackeray; his observations were made in much the same upper middle-class society. He held for years a position in the Civil Service. He was an indefatigable fox-hunter and traveller, and an equally indefatigable writer, turning off at the rate of so many pages a day, wherever he might travel, his numerous serially published novels. *The Warden* (1855) was the first of importance, and *Barchester Towers* (1857), which followed it, may contest

with *The Last Chronicle of Barset* (1867) for the position of the best. These all belong to a series of thirteen "Cathedral Stories," portraying life among the country clergy and gentry. A very faithful, Miss-Austen-like reflection of things as they are, or rather were, and the power to amuse, if not often to thrill or fascinate, are their main characteristics.

Charles Kingsley, a Cambridge man, and successively curate, rector, lecturer on literature, professor of history, and canon of Westminster, is the most distinctly academic among these novelists. Through his versatility, however, he associated himself with various classes of writers. He was, to begin with, a friend of Tennyson and a poet of real excellence; his songs, for instance *The Three Fishers*, *The Sands of Dee*, *Lorraine*, etc., are widely admired, while the long poem of *Andromeda* (1858) is absolutely the best example of dactylic hexameters in the English language. He responded to the Oxford Movement, going with the wing of so-called Christian socialists, and later engaging in an unfortunate controversy with Newman. He was an enthusiastic disciple of some of Carlyle's doctrines, and in his interest in historical study and writing not unlike his brother-in-law, Froude. But his best work was done in fiction, and in this he showed much the same facility as his fellow-novelists in passing from a realistic treatment of contemporary themes to historical romance. The middle of the century was a time of much anxiety for England because of the revolutionary temper and vigorously pressed demands of the working classes as evidenced in the Chartist movement. Kingsley put forward his remedy of liberal church reform and Christian harmony in two passionate novels, *Yeast* (1848) and *Alton Locke* (1850). Then he produced the historical novels *Hypatia* (1853) and *Westward Ho!* (1855). The former presents, not without a lesson for modern times, the struggle between Greek philosophy and Christianity in Alexandria in the fifth century. The latter sets forth, in brilliant narrative, the adventurous and buccaneer-

ing spirit of Elizabethan days. It attempts also to use the prose style of the Elizabethan period, as Thackeray had used the English of the Queen Anne period in *Esmond*. One more book of Kingsley's should be mentioned, *The Water Babies* (1863), a delightful mixture of fairy-tale, science, and satire. The two historical novels, however, are his masterpieces.

The increasing part which women have taken in the production of literature becomes especially evident in the later history of the novel. Among the popular writers of the middle of the century, for instance, may be noted Mrs. Gaskell, the author of various realistic tales not unlike Maria Edgeworth's, several of which—*Mary Barton* (1848), a kind of factory novel, and *Cranford* (1853), an entertaining picture of feminine society in a small, neglected village—have become fairly classic. There were, moreover, two women of the time, who in our present estimate measure up nearly to the standard of Dickens and Thackeray—who evinced, that is to say, genuinely creative powers. The first of these was Charlotte Brontë, the other, George Eliot.

The life of Charlotte Brontë, like the Yorkshire moors which bounded it, was pitifully starved and stern. Her father was a poor clergyman of Irish birth, not over sympathetic, and as his children were early left motherless, the picture of their existence at Haworth parsonage has little to relieve its sombre shades. There was apparently nothing for the three girls but to become governesses, and Charlotte and Emily, the two elder, spent some heartsick months in Brussels in pursuance of this purpose. At home they found pastime in writing poems and stories, and in 1846 the three, Charlotte, Emily, and Anne, published together a volume of verse, "by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell." The best of the verse was by Emily, but it attracted little attention. Charlotte had still less success with her first novel, *The Professor*, which was offered to various publishers in vain. Then, in the face of discouragement and domestic drudgery and sor-

Charlotte
Brontë,
1816-1855.

row, her brother disgraced and dying, her father temporarily blind, Charlotte, with a persistence little short of heroic, wrote, out of her heart and life, *Jane Eyre*. The book was published late in 1847, and was followed very shortly by Emily's essentially Gothic tale of horror, *Wuthering Heights*, and Anne's much tamer *Agnes Grey*. Who, asked the public, were the authors? Who, in particular, was "Currer Bell?" For *Jane Eyre* had made a profound sensation. The identity of the sisters was soon disclosed; but Emily died in 1848 and Anne in 1849, and only the heroine of *Jane Eyre*, now revealed as a genius, remained. Two more books were to come from her pen before she too succumbed—*Shirley* (1849) and *Villette* (1853), both also in many respects "documentary," the latter reflecting her Brussels experiences. *The Professor* was published after her death; but nothing dislodged the earlier novel from its position as her masterpiece, although *Villette* may be reckoned a close competitor.

Charlotte Brontë was not acquainted with Jane Austen's works, but she was really first of the later school to get back to that minute and faithful transcript of reality which is the fullest warrant for the use of the term "realism." Dickens ran too much to extravagance and caricature; Thackeray's, Lytton's, Trollope's, and Mrs. Gaskell's efforts in this kind all date later than *Jane Eyre*. Miss Brontë proposed to take a heroine "as small and as plain" as herself; and *Jane Eyre* is herself, not only in smallness and plainness, but in defiant unconventionality and in the imagination and passion seething beneath a lid of poverty and bigoted repression. She is an orphan cruelly treated by an aunt, is sent away to school, becomes a governess, and falls desperately in love with the big-nosed, grim-jawed, forty-year-old man of the world, the self-confessed villain Rochester, in whose house she has become installed. This is how she talks to herself:

"How dared you? Poor stupid dupe! Could not even self-interest make you wiser? You repeated to yourself this morning

the brief scene of last night? Cover your face and be ashamed! He said something in praise of your eyes, did he? . . .

"Listen then, Jane Eyre, to your sentence: to-morrow, place the glass before you, and draw in chalk your own picture, faithfully; without softening one defect; omit no harsh line, smooth away no displeasing irregularity; write under it, 'Portrait of a Governess, disconnected, poor, and plain.'"

And this is how she talks to Rochester—for she always spoke what she thought and believed, even when upon their first acquaintance he asked her whether she did not think him handsome:

"I tell you I must go!" I retorted, roused to something like passion. "Do you think I can stay to become nothing to you? Do you think I am an automaton?—a machine without feelings? and can bear to have my morsel of bread snatched from my lips, and my drop of living water dashed from my cup? Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong!—I have as much soul as you,—and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you. I am not talking to you now through the medium of custom, conventionalities, nor even of mortal flesh—it is my spirit that addresses your spirit; just as if both had passed through the grave, and we stood at God's feet, equal,—as we are!"

It needs no words to prove that this is a startlingly original and live book, one of the kind that leaves furrows on the soul. It has faults enough, especially in plot, and in the almost ridiculous delineation of those characters and scenes that lay outside of Miss Brontë's observation. Evidently, what she understood, she could—and little more. When experience failed her, she fell back upon conventionality. The realism of the story, too, is curiously crossed with melodrama. Yet the melodrama is half redeemed by the poetic feeling that accompanies it. The lurid lights are of no stage manufacture, but spring from a genuine imagination. Thus the homely woof of the tale is often shot with colors of romance. Particularly rich and strange, with all their truthfulness, are the descriptions of nature in both



GEORGE ELIOT
CHARLOTTE BRONTË

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY
CHARLES DICKENS

its bright and its sombre moods, descriptions drawn as by a spirit in some occult relation of sympathy

"It was not without a certain wild pleasure I ran before the wind delivering my trouble of mind to the measureless air-torrent thundering through space. Descending the laurel-walk, I faced the wreck of the chestnut-tree; it stood up, black and riven: the trunk, split down the centre, gaped ghastly. The cloven halves were not broken from each other, for the firm base and strong roots kept them unsundered below; the sap could flow no more. . . . As I looked up at them the moon appeared momentarily in that part of the sky which filled their fissure; her disk was blood-red and half overcast; she seemed to throw on me one bewildered, dreary glance, and buried herself again instantly in the deep drift of cloud. The wind fell, for a second, round Thornfield; but far away over wood and water, poured a wild, melancholy wail."

Or take the same thing under a figure, and find concentrated in two sentences the qualities of the book, its realism and its poetry, its natural magic and its heart-wringing, as it was heart-wrung, personal passion:

"Jane Eyre, who had been an ardent, expectant woman—almost a bride—was a cold, solitary girl again: her life was pale; her prospects were desolate. A Christmas frost had come at midsummer; a white December storm had whirled over June; ice glazed the ripe apples; drifts crushed the blowing roses; on hay-field and corn-field lay a frozen shroud; lanes which last night blushed full of flowers, to-day were pathless with untrodden snow; and the woods, which twelve hours since waved leafy and fragrant as groves between the tropics, now spread, waste, wild, and white as pine-forests in wintry Norway."

After all, what Miss Brontë understood is enough; and it is this central passion, this volcanic utterance of burning, human truth, that makes her and her novels great.

Charlotte Brontë was "famous and dead" before George Eliot, but three years her junior, had published anything but a few translations and essays. "George Eliot" was the pen-name of Mary Ann Evans (later Marian Evans, and ultimately Mrs. Cross), the daughter of a Methodist land-steward of Warwickshire. Early in life she changed from strict to distinctly

liberal religious views, spent a year (1849-50) in study at Geneva, and returned to England to assist soon afterward in editing the radical *Westminster Review*. She was *George Eliot*, thus brought into contact with eminent thinkers, 1819-1880. among them George Henry Lewes, John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer. With the first-named, a brilliant critic of philosophical bent, she formed a union which lasted until his death in 1878. Very shortly before her own death she married Mr. J. W. Cross, a New York banker and an old friend.

It was under the influence of Spencer and Lewes that George Eliot discovered where her real talent lay, and also under the influence of them and others, including the French positivist philosopher Comte, that she came in the end to overlay that talent with such a web of science, philosophy, and ethical doctrine as almost to obscure its brilliance. In 1857 she contributed to *Blackwood's Magazine* "The Sad Fortunes of the Rev. Amos Barton," which with two other very realistic tales was published the next year under the title of *Scenes of Clerical Life*. In 1859 appeared her first long novel, *Adam Bede*, which placed her at once among the foremost writers of the time. It was followed in 1860 by another long novel, *The Mill on the Floss*, and that in 1861 by a shorter one, *Silas Marner*. Then came a somewhat marked change. While travelling in Italy she formed an "ambitious project," which was to write a romance of the Italian Renaissance with the scene laid in Florence at the time of Savonarola's career and martyrdom. The feat was accomplished, and the result was the ponderous but still successful story of *Romola* (1863). Her next exploit was in the field of English politics and love, with *Felix Holt* (1866), perhaps her weakest novel, as the result. Then, after her drama of the *Spanish Gypsy* (1868) and some not very poetical poetry, appeared a third novel of this later, more complex type, *Middlemarch* (1871-72). So well did this suit the taste of the time for patient analysis, complex character drawing, and free discussion of moral problems, that it established a kind of George Eliot cult,

and her name, oddly enough, was mentioned along with Shakespeare's and Goethe's. Her last novel, *Daniel Deronda* (1876), dealing not unsympathetically with modern Hebrew life and ideals, showed once more a falling off from its predecessor.

It is still too early to speak with confidence of the final place and importance of this work. One thing, however, begins to seem clear, and that is that the significance which at the time of George Eliot's death was attached to her later achievements was an exaggerated one, and that the four novels of the early group show the greater vitality. They are works of much less study and labor, being less weighted with "purpose," and springing more directly from the author's experience and observation. Like the *Vicar of Wakefield*, which the author much admired, they are racy with the humor and pathos of peasant and lower middle-class life. The *Scenes of Clerical Life* were soon discovered to contain portraits dangerously "like." Maggie Tulliver, the rebellious genius of *The Mill on the Floss*, was clearly none other than Mary Ann Evans herself, and Tom was her brother Isaac; while Aunt Glegg and her parsimonious spouse, Aunt Pullet, the hen-pecked Uncle Pullet, Bob Jakin the pedler, and the rest, came out of the same provincial environment. Miss Evans had an aunt, too, who, like Dinah Morris in *Adam Bede*, was a Methodist exhorter, and who had told her just such an anecdote of child-murder as plays an important part in that novel. *Adam Bede* was partly modelled after her own father. The homely truthfulness of the scenes is not the least of their charms. One does not readily forget such a picture as that of Maggie Tulliver slipping fearfully in to dinner after cutting off her hair in a pique at being scolded for not keeping it behind her ears:

Mrs. Tulliver's scream made all eyes turn towards the same point as her own, and Maggie's cheeks and ears began to burn, while uncle Glegg, a kind-looking, white-haired old gentleman, said—

"Heyday! what little gell's this—why; I don't know her. Is it some little gell you've picked up in the road, Kezia?"

"Why, she's gone and cut her hair herself," said Mr. Tulliver in an under-tone to Mr. Deane, laughing with much enjoyment. "Did you ever know such a little hussy as it is?"

"Why, little miss, you've made yourself look very funny," said uncle Pullet, and perhaps he never in his life made an observation which was felt to be so lacerating.

"Fie, for shame!" said aunt Glegg, in her loudest, severest tone of reproof. "Little gells as cut their own hair should be whipped and fed on bread and water—not come and sit down with their aunts and uncles."

"Ay, ay," said uncle Glegg, meaning to give a playful turn to this denunciation, "she must be sent to jail, I think, and they'll cut the rest of her hair off there, and make it all even."

"She's more like a gypsy nor ever," said aunt Pullet, in a pitying tone; "it's very bad luck, sister, as the gell should be so brown—the boy's fair enough. I doubt it'll stand in her way i' life to be so brown."

"She's a naughty child, as'll break her mother's heart," said Mrs. Tulliver, with the tears in her eyes.

Maggie seemed to be listening to a chorus of reproach and derision. Her first flush came from anger, which gave her a transient power of defiance, and Tom thought she was braving it out, supported by the recent appearance of the pudding and custard. Under this impression, he whispered, "Oh my! Maggie, I told you you'd catch it." He meant to be friendly, but Maggie felt convinced that Tom was rejoicing in her ignominy. Her feeble power of defiance left her in an instant, her heart swelled, and, getting up from her chair, she ran to her father, hid her face on his shoulder, and burst out into loud sobbing.

"Come, come, my wench," said her father, soothingly, putting his arm round her, "never mind; you was i' the right to cut it off if it plagued you; give over crying: father'll take your part."

But beyond this simple realism the stories have their interest of humorous or tragic plot, and are provided with a quite sufficient and serious criticism of life. Silas Marner, for instance, the weaver of Raveloe, is a wronged and embittered man who finds nothing to live for but his hoard of gold, but who is brought back to human sympathy by the love of a child. "Eh, there's trouble i' this world," Mrs. Winthrop had counselled him, "and there's things as we can niver make out the rights on. And all

as we've got to do is to trusten, Master Marner—to do the right thing as fur as we know, and to trusten.” And Silas Marner declares in the end, “Since the time the child was sent to me, and I've come to love her as myself, I've had light enough to trusten by; and now she says she'll never leave me, I think I shall trusten till I die.”

The merits of the later novels are to be sought in their keen analysis of character and ethical motive, and the underlying philosophy of life. Tito Melema, the beautiful young Greek in *Romola*, is a self-indulgent creature, not wholly indifferent to the call of duty, but weakly following the easiest line of conduct till character gradually slips away, and destiny, in the form of Baldassarre's avenging fingers, takes him by the throat. Dr. Lydgate, to select only one character from the almost epical *Middlemarch*, is another study in degeneration—a man sacrificing all his intellectual strength and aspiration to an unworthy but unconquerable passion, allowing the beauty of one weak woman to be the instrument of loss to the world at large. It is obvious that George Eliot has a strong propensity toward the portrayal of frustrated lives; she reiterates in various forms the human truth that “there's a sort of wrong that can never be made up for.” Yet she is not a pessimist. The virtue of the individual may not bring personal reward, but she teaches very plainly that the self-sacrifice of the individual means hope and help for humanity, just as surely as the refusal to make such sacrifice means far more than personal ruin. Altruism is the name coined by Comte for this doctrine, and if one must reduce these novels of purpose to something like a formula, it must take this name. One may not care to treat creative literature thus; but facts are not to be ignored, and it is one of the facts of a strenuously intellectual and introspective age that art itself has been often the avowed instrument of a philosophical or moral creed. From Walter Scott, the careless romancer, to George Eliot, the painstaking moralist, is a very great span, but the nineteenth century novel bridged it in less than fifty years.

CHAPTER XX

MISCELLANEOUS VICTORIAN PROSE

CARLYLE BUSKIN NEWMAN ARNOLD HUXLEY

We are now to take up those discursive forms of prose that lie outside of creative fiction—the prose that serves as an embodiment of ideas rather than of imagination and invention. It ranges from the brief essay to the elaborate history. History and criticism, indeed, comprehend the major portion of such discursive prose of the Victorian age as rises to the status of literature, and it is further significant that criticism should be the more conspicuous of the two. The style, we shall find, is free, varying with the individual quite as much as in the earlier part of the century. The themes, moreover, are as diverse as the interests and activities of the age. It is of course natural that such activities should be reflected more directly in this prose than in poetry or fiction. Now and then a social problem may be made the half serious basis of an elaborate poem, as in Tennyson's *Princess*; politics may be glanced at in an occasional verse like that about Freedom "slowly broadening down;" or science may be employed in a chance figure. But the prose essay or treatise attacks these subjects directly. We may look to find, therefore, in the literary prose of the middle of the century abundant echoes of chartism, philanthropy, church reform, the new education, science and art,—in short, of the whole liberal movement.

Of strictly critical writing, the larger part proceeds from the later years of the period now under consideration. Narration and exhortation, always more attractive from the literary point of view than deliberate exposition, still dominated in the earlier

years, and we begin this chapter with Carlyle, who was far more a historian and exhorter than he was a critic. Nor should it be forgotten that the historian Macaulay belongs here half by right. We placed him with the earlier group partly because of his links with the past and his share in the development of journalism, and partly because, though younger than Carlyle, with whose name his is often associated, he began to write earlier and died earlier, so that he seems to have belonged to a remoter generation. But his great *History* was conceived and written late—after Carlyle's *French Revolution* in fact—and is by every consideration one of the monuments of Victorian prose. Added to Carlyle's work, and to that of such successors as Froude and Freeman, it would help to strike more evenly the balance of the æge between the two classes of prose.

Thomas Carlyle is not only a conspicuous figure in nineteenth century English literature, but also one of the most commanding and picturesque personalities in the history of genius. He was the third of that very dissimilar trio who for nearly a hundred years gave

Thomas
Carlyle,
1795-1881.

Scotland an honored place in English letters. Scott published his first work the year Burns died, and Carlyle his first important work the year after Scott died; the succession was practically unbroken. Moreover, the life of Carlyle began just as that of Burns was closing, for he was born five years before the end of the eighteenth century. He was the son of a stonemason of the village of Ecclefechan, in the south of Scotland. At the age of fourteen he went to Edinburgh, walking the entire distance of eighty miles, to attend the University. His primary object was to enter the ministry, but this purpose he later abandoned; and somewhat later still he passed through an agonizing but finally victorious spiritual struggle like that recounted of Teufelsdröckh in *Sartor Resartus*. After leaving the University, he tried teaching, but without much success; law, which he read for a time, he also abandoned. Meanwhile, he was writing book reviews, translations for the magazines, and articles for

encyclopædias. His first book, *Life of Schiller* (1825), was originally a contribution to the *London Magazine*, that foster-mother of both Lamb and De Quincey. In 1826 took place his marriage to Jane Baillie Welsh, a woman of beauty and intellectual attainments, who sacrificed more to her admiration of Carlyle's genius than most women would have cared to do, for in 1828, in almost desperate poverty, the pair were obliged to remove to the Welsh family manor of Craigenputtock. The six lonesome years they spent there were perhaps not wholly unhappy, though Carlyle, with his dyspepsia, his want of domestic sympathy, his morose meditations, and his ambitions and disappointments, was not made for happiness. It was at Craigenputtock that he wrote *Sartor Resartus*. Since the public would not have his ordinary work, he evolved this extraordinary one, a thing at once satirically Swiftian and transcendently Goethean, and composed in a style that was a little like that of Sterne or of Richter, but more like that of no one under the sun. It was published in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1833-34, when it excited practically only amazement or ridicule; though the young American, Emerson, was sufficiently attracted by it to seek out the still unproclaimed genius at his lonely farm.

Then Carlyle, almost forty years of age, made the last move of a struggling man of letters. He went to London, took up his home in Cheyne Row, Chelsea, where he was to live for the next forty-seven years, and wrote again. This time it was the *French Revolution*, and though the manuscript of the first volume was accidentally burned and had to be rewritten, the whole was completed and published by 1837. "This," he declared to his wife as he finished it, "I could tell the world: You have not had for a hundred years any book that comes more direct and flamingly from the heart of a living man." Fortunately, the hearts of living men responded, and Carlyle found himself at last upon the path where the younger feet of Macaulay, Dickens, and others, had preceded him. He lectured successfully, on *Heroes and Hero-Worship* (1841) for

example, and published books called forth by the political and social ferment of the day, among them *Chartism* (1839), *Past and Present* (1843), and *Latter-Day Pamphlets* (1850). He wrote more history—the *Life and Letters of Oliver Cromwell* (1845), and that most stupendous of all biography-histories, *Frederick the Great* (1858–65), in six volumes. These, with certain early essays such as those on Burns and Goethe, the Correspondence with Emerson, and the *Life of John Sterling* (1851), a fine example of the biography of a lesser man by a greater, constitute his chief works. But though his productive period was by 1865 ended, his days were much prolonged. His wife died in 1866, during his absence at Edinburgh, and then, too late, he seemed fully to realize her rare qualities, and mourned sincerely the hardships which his too selfish devotion to his own ambitions had imposed upon her. His remorseful tribute runs through the posthumous *Reminiscences* (1881), a book that, as a human document, has few equals. He died in 1881 and was buried at the place of his birth.

The odd title of *Sartor Resartus*, the “Tailor Re-Tailored,” gives some indication of the odd nature of his first important book. Carlyle professed to have discovered a chaotic German work on the philosophy of clothes which he undertook to present to the British public in the form of liberal selections, translated, and furnished with a running commentary of his own. He even introduced some autobiography and romance by giving, in a second part, a history of the supposed German author, Professor Teufelsdröckh (“Devil’s-dirt”) of the University of Weissnichtwo (“No-Man-Knows-Where”). By some readers this fiction was actually taken seriously; and in fact, with all its grotesqueries, the book was very seriously intended. It is a Quixotic tilt at the shams and hollowness of conventional life. Clothes are employed as a symbol of all those husks and “wrappages”—words, customs, institutions, or what not—beneath which sincerity and reality forever

tend to hide. Carlyle was playing the prophet, with the purpose of tearing away this clothes-screen and letting in the light.

"Perhaps not once in a lifetime does it occur to your ordinary biped, of any country or generation, be he gold-mantled Prince or russet-jerkined Peasant, that his Vestments and his Self are not one and indivisible; that he is naked without vestments, till he buy or steal such, and by fore-thought sew and button them."

"The beginning of all Wisdom, is to look fixedly on Clothes, or even with armed eyesight, till they become *transparent*."

Happy he who can look through the Clothes of a Man (the woollen, and fleshly, and official Bank-paper, and State-paper Clothes), into the Man himself; and discern, it may be, in this or the other Dread Potentate, a more or less incompetent Digestive-apparatus; yet also an inscrutable venerable Mystery, in the meanest Tinker that sees with eyes."

In the third part of the book, the author grows fairly rhapsodical, involving himself in Platonic mysticism, and treating the human body and the material universe as themselves but symbols, the covering of the spirit, the visible garment of God.

The style of the whole is even more novel than the conception. Capitals and punctuation marks abound. Words are manufactured, compounded, and distorted ("gigmanity," "gulosity," "habilable," "pilgrimings," "speciosities," "beast-godhood") with the utmost license. The sentences disregard every law of order or emphasis. These eccentricities are ingeniously laid at the door of Teufelsdröckh. "Of his sentences, perhaps not more than nine-tenths stand straight on their legs; the remainder are in quite angular attitudes, buttressed-up by props (of parentheses and dashes), and ever with this or that tag-rag hanging from them; a few even sprawl out helplessly on all sides, quite broken-backed and dismembered." Yet in not a few passages, such as the famous midnight reverie of Teufelsdröckh in his watchtower above the city, in the third chapter, or such as the close of the chapter on "Natural Supernaturalism," the writer's imagination and passion triumph

over his studied incoherence, and the uncouth prose becomes in everything but metre absolute poetry.

In the *French Revolution* Carlyle had the advantage of a subject that tied him to facts at the same time that it allowed him to soar. There was every opportunity for "*French Revolution*," imagination and poetry, but none for mysticism.

Hence, perhaps, its more immediate success. The book is not for those who want a simple history, but for those who, having the history, want it vitalized and impressed. Carlyle's method is panoramic and dramatic. By vivid description, by exclamation, by the use of the historical present, by exhortation or admonition, addressed directly to the actors, he makes the past live again as perhaps no other historian has succeeded in doing—as it cannot do even on a painter's canvas. We hear the maddened cries of the mob as it sweeps toward the Bastille. We watch with the throngs on the roofs while the funeral of Mirabeau passes. With Marat we listen to the rap on the bath-room door that announces Charlotte Corday. With Robespierre we mount the steps of the Tribune and struggle to speak against the mutinous uproar. We share in the breathless trepidation of the Night of Spurs and the phlegmatic King's futile flight to Varennes:

"The thick shades of Night are falling. Postilions crack and whip: the Royal Berline is through Clermont, where Colonel Comte de Damas got a word whispered to it; is safe through, towards Varennes; rushing at the rate of double drink-money: an Unknown '*Inconnu* on horseback,' shrieks earnestly some hoarse whisper, not audible, into the rushing Carriage-window, and vanishes, left in the night. August Travellers palpitate; nevertheless overwearied Nature sinks every one of them into a kind of sleep. Alas, and Drouet and Clerk Guillaume spur; taking side-roads, for shortness, for safety; scattering abroad that moral-certainty of theirs; which flies, a bird of the air carrying it!

"And your rigorous Quartermaster spurs; awakening hoarse trumpet-tone,—as here at Clermont, calling out Dragoons gone to bed. Brave Colonel de Damas has them mounted, in part, these Clermont men; young Cornet Remy dashes off with a few. But

the Patriot Magistracy is out here at Clermont too; National Guards shrieking for ball-cartridges; and the Village 'illuminates itself;'—deft Patriots springing out of bed; alertly, in shirt or shift, striking a light; sticking up each his farthing candle, or penurious oil-cruse, till all glitters and glimmers; so deft are they! A *camisado*, or shirt-tumult, everywhere: storm-bell set a-ringing; village-drum beating furious *générale*, as here at Clermont, under illumination; distracted Patriots pleading and menacing! Brave young Colonel de Damas, in that uproar of distracted Patriotism, speaks some fire-sentences to what Troopers he has: 'Comrades insulted at Sainte-Menehould: King and Country calling on the brave;' then gives the fire-word, *Draw swords*. Whereupon, alas, the Troopers only *smite* their sword-handles, driving them farther home! 'To me, whoever is for the King!' cries Damas in despair; and gallops, he with some poor loyal Two, of the Subaltern sort, into the bosom of the Night."

Wholly unequalled in imagination and graphic power, and scarcely surpassed in the soberer qualities of accuracy and judgment, Carlyle's *French Revolution* takes a place among the modern masterpieces of historical composition.

It is indeed as a literary artist gifted with an extraordinary imagination that Carlyle is most secure of future fame.

Carlyle as a Literary Artist. Nature gave him the seeing eye, and he made himself a master of words that transfix. In a sentence, in a word sometimes, he gives a portrait that cannot be forgotten. Coleridge in his latter years,

for instance, seemed to him "a puffy, anxious, obstructed-looking, fattish old man." Lamb, for whom he had little kindness, was "Cockney to the marrow, . . . the *leanest* of mankind, tiny black breeches buttoned to the knee-cap and no farther, surmounting spindle-legs also in black, face and head fineish, black, bony, lean." Once in his life Teufelsdröckh laughed, and "through those murky features, a radiant ever-young Apollo looked." Mirabeau is "swart, burly-headed!" Robespierre is "the sea-green, incorruptible." In the same way, a natural scene is indelibly impressed. The night before the battle of Dunbar "is wild and wet; the Harvest Moon wades deep among clouds of sleet and hail . . . The hoarse sea moans bodeful,

swinging low and heavy against these whinstone bays; the sea and the tempests are abroad, all else asleep but we,—and there is One that rides on the wings of the wind.” It is, indeed, not alone the graphic realism that arrests attention, but often, also, as in the last example, the sudden imaginative sweep into regions of the true sublime.

Ever since the time of his public acceptance, however, Carlyle has doubtless been most generally regarded as a philosopher or untheological evangelist. At the age of forty-two his position was firmly established, and admiration was seldom thereafter withheld. His influence over other men, especially over idealists like Tennyson and Ruskin, was of a marked character. Yet the rôle of prophet to which he clung, which he played indeed even while he was writing history, was not an easy one, and his admirers were themselves often compelled to dissent from his illogical views. His moral gospel was tonic enough, but his philosophy was not constructive. He took a stubbornly hostile attitude toward society, scolded while he exhorted, and seldom exhorted in a kindly tone. He could see little good in the present; there is always an ill concealed tone of contempt in his references to “these days.” His *Past and Present* draws a strong contrast between mediæval England as portrayed by a chronicler of the old Abbey of St. Edmund’s Bury, and modern England with its social diseases which Corn Laws and Chartism seemed powerless to heal. Philosophy, he thought, was become hopelessly utilitarian; Science, so insignificant by the side of what he liked to call “Nescience,” promised to lead only into deserts of Atheism; Democracy was simply a form of No-government, a great Niagara cataclysm in which society was being surely engulfed. He would divide men sharply into leaders and led. The leaders, the great, wise, gifted men, the “heroes,” are few, and come but at intervals in the history of the world. The rest must follow them like sheep. If the present lacks a leader, there is nothing to do but copy the past and to draw inspiration from

As a
Prophet
and Moral
Regenerator.

the leaders that have been. This is the central motive of his *Heroes and Hero-worship*, in which he selects for delineation great men as they have appeared at various stages of history—a hero simply worshipped, for instance, as a god in the person of Odin, or revered as a man of letters in a Samuel Johnson. History, on this theory, becomes mainly the biography of a few great men; they make history. This is, of course, strongly in contrast with the more general modern view that the man is largely the product of his environment, and that the direction of society is rather the resolution of a multitude of forces than the radiation of a central one. In fact, Carlyle was setting himself squarely against the tendencies, scientific and democratic, which were, and continue to be, the governing tendencies of the age. He stood like a great boulder in the stream of progress, making the waters lash noisily enough about him, but compelled nevertheless to see them sweep by.

Yet with all this, Carlyle was, as we have said, a great moral and tonic force. Every line of his writing vibrates with moral earnestness. His imaginative insight was in itself an instrument of revelation to the less happily gifted. He not only carried on an effective warfare against shams, but he insisted equally on stripping away all self-delusion. He made men pause and see, after all, the limitations of their vaunted science in the presence of the infinite. He reopened the springs of wonder, and he taught that wonder, in the midst of boundless miracle and mystery, is itself the highest worship. He declared that idealism was not, and never will be, dead; that spiritual forces still dominate; that the Universe is not a machine, but an organism, alive, complex, and, above all, moral. Out of this grew his constant insistence upon action and his doctrine of duty. Action is the law of being and the mainspring of righteous life. "Doubt of any sort cannot be removed but by action." "Not what I Have, but what I Do, is my kingdom." "Blessed is he who has found his work." For not happiness, he declared, is the goal of life, but blessedness, and blessedness is found

only in the performance of duty. "Do the Duty which lies nearest thee; thy second Duty will already have become clearer." "Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name! 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee: out with it, then. Up, up! . . . Work while it is called To-day; for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work." Through whatever mists of transcendentalism or clouds of error and perversity it come, such a clarion call as this finds men to listen.

John Ruskin, a considerably younger man than Carlyle, was an ardent disciple of the prophet of Cheyne Row. In loyalty, doubtless, to his own Scotch blood, he was also a great admirer of Walter Scott. He was the son of a prosperous London wine merchant, who had married a Scotch cousin, and was brought up in and about London. His whole life and character showed clearly the results of his early training, which was a strange mixture of parental sternness and solicitude. He was the only child and was watched over—nursed, one might almost say—far into manhood. Yet he was not governed by love. His parents were no more loved by him, he says, than the sun and the moon. He was schooled in absolute obedience, yet never disabused of the idea that he was a precocious genius. He had no playmates, and was denied all luxuries and even playthings, so that for amusement he was reduced to studying the patterns in the carpet and the wall-paper. His mother was a strict Calvinist and he had to read the Bible daily, with Pope's *Homer* and Scott for supplement, or on Sunday the *Pilgrim's Progress*. In summer-time there was the pleasure of travelling with his parents in a chaise through the country regions of England and Scotland, where his father solicited orders for wines. Such a discipline was sure to be fruitful of both good and evil, and Ruskin has endeavored to trace the strands of both influences in his delightfully frank autobiography, *Præterita*. It is at least easy to see how on the one hand he should have grown up with a love for literature, art, and nature, and with a highly

John
Ruskin,
1819-1900.

developed moral sense; and how, on the other hand, he should have been, as he says, "conceited"—independent in his views, very positive in the expression of them, and strangely unable, when thrown upon his own resources or confronted with disappointments, to adjust himself to the conditions about him. At the same time no view of Ruskin's character would be complete that did not take into account, not only the rarity of his genius, but also the inherent nobility of nature and sweetness of disposition that made him one of the most lovable of men. He never triumphed completely over his defects, but the balance in the long run was on the right side.

Ruskin was entered as a gentleman-commoner at Christ Church, Oxford, where at the age of twenty he won the Newdigate prize with a poem (four years before Arnold's *Art Critic.* similar feat), and where, after the interruption of two years travel for his health, he was graduated in 1842. He had already written considerable second-rate poetry and some almost first-rate prose; and now, with a consciousness and definiteness of purpose rare in young graduates, he set about a work which was to prove in the end not only a masterpiece, but, in its own field, fairly epoch-making. Two events of importance had prepared the way for it. When he was thirteen his father, who was a lover of art, had purchased a copy of Rogers's *Italy* with vignettes by Turner which opened to him at once a new source of delight. And in the following year, upon a tour to the continent undertaken by the family with the intention of visiting the scenes which the book portrayed, he got his first revelation of the full sublimity of mountain scenery in a vision of the snowy glories of the Alps as seen from Schaffhausen. He was filled with two joys, the joy of nature, and of nature in art. He had some skill in drawing and he worked hard to perfect himself, first by imitation of the masters, and then through the independent discovery that the only true method was to copy from nature. His admiration of Turner steadily increased, until he came to the conviction that Turner



JOHN HENRY NEWMAN
THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY

THOMAS CARLYLE
JOHN RUSKIN

was the greatest genius of the age. Turner was already an old man who had followed the too little appreciated art of landscape painting, illuminating his fundamentally faithful sketches with a gorgeous and sometimes extravagant imagination, but working so contrary to the conventional methods of the schools that artists were inclined to ignore him, while the general public, though dazzled by his pictures, did not profess to understand them. Slowly but surely Ruskin formed the purpose of enlightening the public and converting the artists, not only on the particular subject of Turner's genius, but upon the whole nature and function of art. His father made him birthday presents of "Turners;" and an attack on Turner in *Blackwood's Magazine* called from the boy of only seventeen a defence, which was submitted to Turner himself, who in some indifference sent it to the purchaser of the maligned picture. But when the boy became a man, he returned to the charge and in the year 1843 appeared the first volume of *Modern Painters*, "By a Graduate of Oxford." The cause was not won, perhaps, by this single blow, but a sensation was certainly created. Men awoke to a realization that here was one of the freest, freshest, and most vigorous specimens of criticism their generation had known, and one of the most beautiful and impassioned pieces of literature ever inspired by the subject of art. Moreover, the central doctrine of the work, that art is not a conventional thing, but always an imitation of nature, at its sincerest and best when the imitation is closest, and that Turner and certain other "moderns" were therefore greater landscape artists than Claude and Poussin, did, before the lapse of many years, prevail.

Indeed, Ruskin followed up the first volume with four others, though the last was not published until 1860, some years after Turner's death. Meanwhile he had become a constant visitor to the continent, drawn thither by the double opportunity of studying mountain scenery and art. Architecture began to engage his attention and he interrupted the progress of his first book for two others of quite equal importance, *The*

Seven Lamps of Architecture (1849) and *Stones of Venice* (1851–53). The former lays down certain fundamental principles of building and illustrates them by the cathedrals of England; the first “lamp,” for instance, as one might guess, is Truth, or the simple law that a building should always look to be what it is. The *Stones of Venice* is a patient and enthusiastic study of the moral history of Venice as written in her palaces and monuments of stone. Both—and mark here the romanticism of Scott in a new and wonderful guise—were filled with a profound and reasoned admiration for Gothic architecture, which had been so long condemned as barbaric, doing for it in the eyes of an unregenerate age precisely what *Modern Painters* was doing for Turnerian landscape painting and kindred arts. Ruskin became the evangelist of a widely accepted creed, and his genius later found a special acknowledgment in his appointment for many years to the Slade Professorship of Art at Oxford.

But before this last event, about 1860, there came over the man Ruskin a profound change. His theories had never been without a moral coloring, a point in which his discipleship of Carlyle is most evident; and now, clearly under that discipleship, though with half of his life already behind him, he determined to engage openly in a moral warfare. He had arrived at the conviction that noble art itself can only come from noble life, and modern life seemed to him almost hopelessly deficient in ideality and spirituality. He became, indeed, so possessed with this idea that he became sometimes utterly dispirited, letting his works go out of print and declaring that his labors had been in vain. But mastering his melancholy as best he could, he undertook the ever gigantic task of social reform. Most of his books and lectures from this time forward were inspired by the new purpose. *Unto this Last*, essays contributed in 1860 to Thackeray’s *Cornhill Magazine*, was a treatise upon the elements of political economy, more sentimental than scientific, which, maintaining that souls are the only real forces in society, taught the funda-

*Social
Reformer.*

mental postulate that "*there is no wealth but Life*—Life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration." It was Carlyle's cry against a mechanical, utilitarian civilization, repeated with an equally passionate sincerity. Thus, in various ways, Ruskin's work went on. He delivered lectures, like the popular *Sesame and Lilies* (1865). He undertook practical experiments. Oxford students were set to mending roads. Tenement houses in London were conducted on a model plan. Even street-crossings were kept clean out of Ruskin's private purse, as an example of what should be done. An agricultural community, the Guild of St. George, was established upon half-medieval and chivalric principles and largely supported by the great fortune which his father had left him, while a long series of monthly letters, *Fors Clavigera* (1871-78), were addressed to workmen, setting forth his Utopian ideals. The work was not futile, but it failed, of course, as all such idealism has failed, in realizing the hopes of the idealist. Ruskin's health at last gave way under the strain. His mind became clouded, and he withdrew to the beautiful home of Brantwood, by Coniston Water, in the Lake Country, which in 1871 he had purchased for his declining years. His life had perhaps never been wholly happy. His brief marital experience in middle life had been unfortunate, and later disappointments, and the ridicule with which his opinions were often assailed, intensified his loneliness. But he had at least the joy—blessedness, as Carlyle would have said—that comes from earnest, unremitting toil, and a consciousness of lifelong, generous sacrifice. He died in 1900, and was buried in Coniston Churchyard.

We recur to the early half of Ruskin's life-work as the most significant portion. Upon the dogmatic temper of his criticism, and upon the exaggerations and idiosyncrasies that impair his gospel of art, we cannot stay. The fundamental teaching that art must follow nature, not, of course, in slavish copying, or mere mechanical, unimaginative imitation, but in the careful observance of the laws which

*Æsthetic
Moralist.*

underlie the phenomena of nature, whether in lichen growth or mountain structure, is a teaching which few will now question or venture to disobey. It was not Ruskin's alone, but he gave it new authority and power. More particularly his is the ethical and religious teaching that art and morality cannot be separated, that true art, as was said above, must grow out of noble character, that it is testimony to the artist's delight in nature, which is the handiwork of God, and that it can arise only under conditions when the artist, be he the humblest workman in the building of a cathedral, has joy in the work of his own hands. However inadequately this may state the whole truth, it is essentially wholesome and inspiring, and the sincerity and passion with which it was preached have not been without avail. Merely as a practical outcome, Ruskin did much to redeem both English art and English social life in the middle nineteenth century from the tawdriness and even ugliness that then prevailed.

Besides this, moreover, Ruskin did two things about the value of which there can be no dissenting opinion. . He followed

Priest of Nature. up the work which had been begun by Cowper and Wordsworth in poetry, and Turner in painting,—

the work of teaching men to look directly at nature with appreciative eyes. His love of art was really subordinate to his love of nature, and the beauty of nature was for him an end in itself. Not the blossoms for the fruit, he would have said, but the fruit and seed for the blossoms to follow. He would almost have swept away the traces of modern civilization to restore the sightliness of nature undefiled. He had a passion for mountains and clouds, and he tells how, upon his first acquaintance with the Alps, he felt that he wanted not "sight of any thrones in heaven but the rocks, nor of any spirits in heaven but the clouds." Perhaps no one, unless it were Turner, ever studied these particular phenomena so constantly and lovingly; and certainly no one else has so translated into words their beauties and glories.

This leads us to the last consideration—Ruskin as a master of prose. Only by being such could he ever have accomplished what he did in spreading abroad his gospel of art and nature. Men were often won to reading him by the magic of his style alone. It is a romantic, flamboyant style, with little of the classic polish of the eighteenth century in it, but with most of the rhetorical splendors of the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries combined. At the base of it is the noble rhythm of the English Bible; at the crown are the varied virtues of writers like Hooker, Milton, Browne, and Taylor. Melodious rhythm and profusion of imagery are almost everywhere distinguishing marks. Ruskin wrote by ear, as De Quincey did; and he must be read by ear. Yet with all his delight in alliterated and lyrically modulated phrases, and figures that follow each other in endless variety, it is to be noted that clearness is rarely sacrificed and distinctness of sincere purpose never. Always a worshipper of art and nature, and a believer in human love and divine providence, he manages to inform with his fourfold message the highest triumphs of his own art. Take this panorama of a day as viewed from an isolated peak of the Alps:

“Wait a little longer, and you shall see those scattered mists rallying in the ravines, and floating up toward you, along the winding valleys, till they couch in quiet masses, iridescent with the morning light, upon the broad breasts of the higher hills, whose leagues of massy undulation will melt back and back into that robe of material light, until they fade away, lost in its lustre, to appear again above, in the serene heaven, like a wild, bright, impossible dream, foundationless and inaccessible, their very bases vanishing in the substantial and mocking blue of the lake below. Has Claude given this? Wait yet a little longer, and you shall see those mists gather themselves into white towers, and stand like fortresses along the promontories, massy and motionless, only piled with every instant higher and higher into the sky, and casting longer shadows athwart the rocks; and out of the pale blue of the horizon you will see forming and advancing a troop of narrow, dark, pointed vapors, which will cover the sky, inch by inch, with their gray network, and take the

light off the landscape with an eclipse which will stop the singing of the birds and the motion of the leaves together; and then you will see horizontal bars of black shadow forming under them, and lurid wreaths create themselves, you know not how, along the shoulders of the hills; you never see them form, but when you look back to a place which was clear an instant ago, there is a cloud on it, hanging by the precipices, as a hawk pauses over his prey. Has Claude given this? And then you will hear the sudden rush of the awakened wind, and you will see those watch-towers of vapor swept away from their foundations, and waving curtains of opaque rain let down to the valleys, swinging from the burdened clouds in black, bending fringes, or pacing in pale columns along the lake level, grazing its surface into foam as they go. And then, as the sun sinks, you shall see the storm drift for an instant from off the hills, leaving their broad sides smoking, and loaded yet with snow-white, torn, steam-like rags of capricious vapor, now gone, now gathered again; while the smouldering sun, seeming not far away, but burning like a red-hot ball beside you, and as if you could reach it, plunges through the rushing wind and rolling cloud with headlong fall, as if it meant to rise no more, dyeing all the air about it with blood. Has Claude given this? And then you shall hear the fainting tempest die in the hollow of the night, and you shall see a green halo kindling on the summit of the eastern hills, brighter—brighter yet, till the large white circle of the slow moon is lifted up among the barred clouds, step by step, line by line; star after star she quenches with her kindling light, setting in their stead an army of pale, penetrable, fleecy wreaths in the heaven, to give light upon the earth, which move together, hand in hand, company by company, troop by troop, so measured in their unity of motion, that the whole heaven seems to roll with them, and the earth to reel under them. Ask Claude, or his brethren, for that. And then wait yet for one hour, until the east again becomes purple, and the heaving mountains, rolling against it in darkness, like waves of a wild sea, are drowned one by one in the glory of its burning; watch the white glaciers blaze in their winding paths about the mountains, like mighty serpents with scales of fire; watch the columnar peaks of solitary snow, kindling downwards, chasm by chasm, each in itself a new morning; their long avalanches cast down in keen streams brighter than the lightning, sending each his tribute of driven snow, like altar-smoke, up to the heaven; the rose-light of their silent domes flushing that heaven about them and above them, piercing with purer light through its purple lines

of drifted cloud, casting a new glory on every wreath as it passes by, until the whole heaven—one scarlet canopy,—is interwoven with a roof of waving flame, and tossing, vault beyond vault, as with the drifted wings of many companies of angels; and then, when you can look no more for gladness, and when you are bowed down with fear and love of the Maker and Doer of this, tell me who has best delivered this His message unto men!"

The opulence of color and sound in such a passage is almost bewildering, yet so much warrant for it is seen to lie in the substance that it is difficult for the most confirmed admirer of classical restraint to declare it a flaw. The mastery over these qualities at any rate cannot be denied. There are passages in Sir Thomas Browne of a more concentrated magnificence; there are passages in De Quincey that roll with a more sonorous eloquence; but no other English writer has as yet shown such a sustained command over gorgeous color and melodious cadence as this moralist and critic of the Victorian age.

The Oxford or High Church Movement of the thirties and forties, which has been described as among the events of national importance in that period, and which was essentially a reaction against the liberal tendencies of philosophy and science, left its mark on literature. Particularly was this true in the case of John Henry Newman, one of the most spiritually gifted men of the nineteenth century, and all in all the greatest man of letters to adorn theology in latter years. Newman's birth took place at the very beginning of the century, but his intellectual development was not rapid. He was successively a student and Fellow at Oxford, where he early consecrated himself to the Church. In 1828 he was appointed Vicar of St. Mary's, Oxford, and with his Parochial Sermons began to exercise that magnetic influence which was so long to be continued. A journey to the Mediterranean, during which he fell seriously ill was the turning-point in his religious development and an Assize Sermon preached at Oxford on his return in 1833 is sometimes said to have been the

*John Henry
Newman,
1801-1890.*

beginning of the Oxford Movement. Newman was strongly attracted, enchanted indeed, by a romantic vision of the Mediæval Church restored in its grandeur and power, and it was not a very great surprise to his admirers when, as one result of the strong wave of ritualism, he withdrew from his charge and in 1845 united with the Roman Catholic Church. Several years later he founded an oratory at Birmingham, and through his numerous sermons, lectures, and writings, became one of the greatest religious forces of his day. In 1879 the new Pope Leo XIII. recognized his abilities by making him a Cardinal. He died, full of honor, in his ninetieth year.

Newman was a voluminous writer. In his early manhood, especially during his voyage to the Mediterranean, he composed many beautiful lyrics and hymns, among the latter the universally known "Lead, Kindly Light" (*The Pillar of Cloud*), perhaps the crown of English hymnology. A late poem of considerable length, *The Dream of Gerontius* (1866), has many ardent admirers. He wrote also several romances. But his most important works are the prose *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, or Apology for his life, written in answer to an attack by Charles Kingsley in 1864, and the *Grammar of Assent* (1870), books marked by great subtlety of logic and charm of style. The style has never failed to command the warmest approval of discerning readers, yet it defies illustration within the limits of an extract, and almost defies description. Terse, packed phrases like "Great things are done by devotion to one idea," or "Calculation never made a hero," are the exception rather than the rule. The style is leisurely and insinuating, not startling or arresting. There are none of the contortions of Carlyle, and even little of the color and ornament of Ruskin. It is a style that achieves greatness by lucidity and ease, by giving attention to the matter first and to the form apparently not at all. Such a style becomes compelling only in the mass, and that is why the circle of those who really appreciate Newman is comparatively limited. Yet its pervasive influence has spread widely, and the style must be

accounted, with Macaulay's, among the important agents in the formation of the efficient nineteenth-century prose. With it, too, go in this case the authority of an imaginative seeker for truth, and the charm of a dignified and gracious personality.

Matthew Arnold has already been treated among the Victorian poets. But Arnold shares with Milton, Dryden, Landor,

and a few others, the distinction of having written
Matthew with almost equal success in verse and prose. In-
Arnold as deed his prose, though written after his best poetry,
Prose first attracted general attention to him, and his popu-
Writer and lar reputation still rests chiefly upon it. Moreover
Critic.

his prose is so different from his verse, being for the most part as jaunty as that is melancholy and introspective, and pitched as low in style as that is high, that the two could not well be brought into the same focus.

His career as a prose writer virtually began with his appointment as Professor of Poetry at Oxford. He delivered there a series of lectures *On Translating Homer* (1861), in which he set forth with remarkable clearness and insight the principles on which a translation of Homer should be founded, showing how Chapman had failed for want of Homer's simplicity of thought, Pope for want of his plainness of style, Cowper for want of his rapidity, and Francis Newman (Cardinal Newman's brother) for want of his dignity and nobility. In the same lectures he made a number of generalizations on style that clearly marked him as among the keenest and surest of literary critics. From that time on his critical work was broadened to include many subjects, frequently recurring to literature and education in their various phases, as in the lectures *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (1867), or entering upon theological discussion, as in *Literature and Dogma* (1873), and *God and the Bible* (1875), or attacking the larger problems of society, as in *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), *Friendship's Garland* (1871), and the lecture on "Numbers" in *Discourses in America* (1885). His most impor-

tant work of this sort is to be found in *Culture and Anarchy* and the two series of *Essays in Criticism* (1865, 1888).

Of Arnold's prose style little requires to be said. It is easy, conversational, almost wholly devoid of ornament. While he was a very free lance in the critical field, his method was never slashing. He does not thunder with the voice of Carlyle, nor chide with that of Ruskin. He is master of a very keen yet playful irony, always keeping his temper and appearing polite and urbane. Without making any boast of logic, he is precise, orderly, and above all lucid. One never fails to get his idea and his point of view. This clearness is usually secured by reducing each idea to a very definite phrase or formula—such as “to see things as they are,” “poetry a criticism of life,” “to live in the spirit”—and repeating it without variation. The constant repetition becomes a displeasing mannerism, but it accomplishes its purpose most effectively. Disraeli said that one of Arnold's greatest feats consisted in launching phrases.

In literary criticism, Arnold employs much the same method as the French critic, Sainte-Beuve. He refuses to pass judgment in an arbitrary assertion of opinion or personal taste, but endeavors to set up universal standards. In “The Study of Poetry,” for instance, he maintains that there is a personal estimate of poetry which is false, and a historical estimate which is false; what is desired is to get at the real estimate. And he goes at once to what is universally admitted to be the highest in poetry—to Homer and Dante and Shakespeare—and uses passages from their writings as “touchstones” by which to test the value of whatever may be set beside them. Moreover, he looks carefully at each writer's relation to his time and place, and particularly at what the writer specifically aimed to do, judging him by his measure of success in that aim. By such cautious methods, though he did not wholly escape dogmatism, he won almost universal respect for his sanity and freedom from prejudice, and to-day few critical dicta are quoted with more confidence than his.

In theological and religious matters, Arnold was less felicitous. His tendency toward precise definition—he speaks of religion as “morality touched with emotion,” and of God as a “tendency not ourselves that makes for righteousness,”—could not, in such essentially indefinable things, lead to much satisfaction. But in the social field, he approved himself again a critic of the highest merit. He took upon himself the special task of inculcating among the English people greater intelligence, or at least of emphasizing the need for it. He saw too much “Philistinism” in British society, and too much “Hebraism” in the British temper. By the former he meant a narrow-minded concern for material things—for coal mines, great navies, commerce, wealth, physical comfort—and a corresponding indifference to the things of the mind. By Hebraism, he meant a Hebraic and sometimes unbalanced passion for doing right, for putting conduct above knowledge. Carlyle was preaching something very like this Hebraism, and the thing is, of course, good when properly tempered. But Carlyle, with his exaggeration and unreasonableness, illustrated precisely the danger in it which Arnold was deprecating. The important thing, said Arnold, is to see first of all what is right, to have more criticism, more flexibility, a freer play of mind—to have, in short, to use a phrase which he got from Swift’s *Battle of the Books*, more “sweetness and light.” The French, he said, might need more of the passion for doing right; what the English particularly needed was more of the Hellenistic passion for beauty and truth. In all this, he was simply pleading for a more complete and balanced development of all the human powers, for what he called culture, or the study of perfection, in which Hebraism and Hellenism meet.

“But there is of culture another view, in which not solely the scientific passion, the sheer desire to see things as they are, natural and proper in an intelligent being, appears as the ground of it. There is a view in which all the love of our neighbour, the impulses towards action, help, and beneficence, the desire for removing human error,

clearing human confusion, and diminishing human misery, the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it, —motives eminently such as are called social,—come in as part of the grounds of culture, and the main and pre-eminent part. Culture is then properly described not as having its origin in curiosity, but as having its origin in the love of perfection; it is a *study of perfection*. It moves by the force, not merely or primarily of the scientific passion for pure knowledge, but also of the moral and social passion for doing good."

This kind of exhortation, so different in both manner and aim from that of the more romantically tempered Carlyle and Ruskin, was not calculated to reach the masses very directly. Indeed, to be able to read Matthew Arnold at all presupposes a somewhat severe intellectual training. Yet his ideas have become very widely disseminated, and to be able to employ intelligently the dozens of phrases which he made current, is to-day one of the tests of that culture which is based upon a familiarity with "the best that is known and thought in the world."

In the field of history the middle of the nineteenth century had, besides Macaulay and Carlyle, a number of eminent writers. The most trustworthy, probably, and at the same time the one possessed of the largest historic grasp, was Edward Augustus Freeman, author of *The History of the Norman Conquest*.
James Anthony Froude, 1818-1894.

But a far more brilliant man, from a literary point of view, was Freeman's implacably hated rival, James Anthony Froude. Froude was a student and Fellow at Oxford, and for a time a follower of Newman. But he soon completely recanted his High Church profession and left the University. He became later a friend of Carlyle, and, after Carlyle's death his literary executor and biographer. His great work is the minute *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Armada* in twelve volumes (1856-1870). Next to this are a number of *Short Studies on Great Subjects* and two monographs, *John Bunyan* (1878) and *Julius Cæsar* (1879). Froude's

inaccuracy and partisanship are notorious. But no English historian since Macaulay has been so popular. Froude's style is even better than Macaulay's, being equally vivacious and yet simpler and decidedly racier. Moreover, his pages glow with a feeling and an imaginative insight into heroic character that are missing in Macaulay and that are hardly to be found elsewhere in historical writing outside of Carlyle. One may care almost nothing for history and yet read Froude with the liveliest interest, so potent is the spell of his romantic picturesqueness.

Two philosophers of the century command attention, John Stuart Mill, the empiricist and utilitarian, and Herbert Spencer, the agnostic. Neither, perhaps, has any special claim to literary consideration beyond what resides in the lucid expression of systematized ideas, but

*Herbert
Spencer,
1820-1903.*

Herbert Spencer has at least taken an eminent position among the thinkers of modern times. He was virtually self-educated. In 1855, four years before Darwin's *Origin of Species*, he published his *Principles of Psychology*, based upon the principles of evolution. Then, in what would ordinarily be regarded as middle life, he planned a vast system of *Synthetic Philosophy* (ten volumes, 1862-1898) which he fortunately lived to complete. In this work, following the usual aim of philosophy to get back to first principles and find unity in diversity, he sought to apply the current investigations of science, and particularly the theory of evolution, to the solution of the whole range of our intellectual and social problems,—with what success, the future will have to determine. He is more popularly known through certain of his detached essays, such as the fairly familiar *Philosophy of Style*.

The survey of this era would scarcely be complete without mention of some representative of physical science itself, which has left so deep a mark on the century. Fortunately, literature had such a representative in Thomas Henry Huxley, who, though the author of no such epochmaking work as Darwin's *Origin of Species*, stands perhaps only second to Darwin among late

English scientists and certainly before him as a man of letters. Huxley began with the study of anatomy and surgery, and finally developed into a biologist in the broadest meaning of the term. Indeed, his researches were extended into almost every branch of science. He espoused Darwin's theory of natural selection, and with passionate earnestness of conviction and perhaps some inherent fondness for controversy, took every opportunity to impress his views upon the public and extend the acceptance of the new doctrines. He urged in particular the teaching of science in the schools. His first work to attract attention was his *Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature* (1863). Among later volumes of importance was his *Lay Sermons, Addresses, and Reviews* (1870). His essays are now collected in nine volumes.

Huxley's style was energetic, like the man,—trenchant and vivid, admirably suited to the purpose it had to serve, though it would probably have proved more effective in the end had it possessed something of Matthew Arnold's milder tone. But Huxley had a difficult battle to wage, both with the forces that arrayed themselves against Arnold's gospel of culture, and to some extent with the forces which Arnold himself represented. Upon the former, the "Philistines," he spends his sharpest sarcasm:

"I have used the past tense in speaking of the practical men—for although they were very formidable thirty years ago, I am not sure that the pure species has not been extirpated. In fact, so far as mere argument goes, they have been subjected to such a fire from the nether world that it is a miracle if any have escaped. But I have remarked that your typical practical man has an unexpected resemblance to one of Milton's angels. His spiritual wounds such as are inflicted by logical weapons, may be as deep as a well and as wide as a church-door, but beyond shedding a few drops of ichor, celestial or otherwise, he is no whit the worse."

But when he finds fault with the assumption that in the study of literature and the humanities is to be found the best criticism of life, and pleads for the equal recognition of scientific study,

he takes a more carefully argumentative, though never less confident, tone:

"The notions of the beginning and the end of the world entertained by our forefathers are no longer credible. It is very certain that the earth is not the chief body in the material universe, and that the world is not subordinated to man's use. It is even more certain that nature is the expression of a definite order with which nothing interferes, and that the chief business of mankind is to learn that order and govern themselves accordingly. Moreover this scientific criticism of life presents itself to us with different credentials from any other. It appeals not to authority, nor to what anybody may have thought or said, but to nature. It admits that all our interpretations of natural fact are more or less imperfect and symbolic, and bids the learner seek for truth not among words but among things. It warns us that the assertion which outstrips evidence is not only a blunder but a crime. The purely classical education advocated by the representatives of the Humanists in our day, gives no inkling of all this."

Solidly grounded in his patiently acquired facts, preaching a profounder reverence for truth than was possible before the advent of modern science, and equipped, as these quotations show, with no mean literary ability, Huxley entered the arena of nineteenth-century thought and, to the honor of both science and letters, carried off some of its proudest laurels.

CHAPTER XXI

THE LATER VICTORIANS

1860-1900

ROSSETTI MORRIS SWINBURNE PATER STEVENSON

The literature of the latter part of the nineteenth century scarcely followed the line of development that, from the character of the period, might have been expected. Huxley and his fellows, for example, did not by any means fight all the battles of science, and it is conceivable that their cause might have had a fuller vindication in some modern *Areopagitica*, had there been a Milton to pen it. But science soon grew too busy with its discoveries and the application of them to care very much about battles of opinion. Much the same thing was true of other dominant interests. The critical spirit continued rife, but this spirit seldom ministers to creative enthusiasm in itself or in others; certainly the later criticism brought forth no such celebrated exponents as Ruskin and Arnold. Perhaps the fiction of the time, when it shall be possible to take a final account of it, will be seen to have been in many aspects typical. It happens, however, that the single writer of fiction who can be included in our present treatment was as thorough-going a romanticist as any that lived a century before him. Instead of carrying us forward, Stevenson takes us back to Scott, and so affords another example of the failure of letters to follow closely the main currents of thought.

Turning to poetry, we find the case much the same. Only negatively, if at all, did it express the intellectual and progressive spirit of the age. For nearly all the poetry of a high order, to leave out of the account Tennyson and Browning, who still lived



DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI
WILLIAM MORRIS

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

and wrote, was the production of a small clique, enthusiastic students of art, in whose work romanticism continued to hold its own, surrendering little to either science or criticism, rather indeed recovering much that the middle of the century may have seemed to surrender. In this, of course, they also were only maintaining the early tradition of the century. Rossetti, Morris, and Swinburne show as direct a descent from Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats, as does Tennyson himself, and an even greater consistency in their allegiance. If there was any intermediate transmission of the tradition, it is rather to be sought in the reactionary prose of Carlyle and Ruskin, which would help to account for the pronounced mediæval and æsthetic tendencies of the "Pre-Raphaelite" group. These are matters, however, which are best studied in connection with the works of the poets themselves.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the leader of the group, was born in London in 1828. His name indicates his Italian descent.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1828-1882. His father was, in fact, a political refugee. But Dante Gabriel never visited his ancestral land, though he learned the Italian language and was thoroughly infused with the spirit of Italian literature and art. The Catholic coloring of his work—the family were Protestant—is likewise to be accounted for by his Italian associations. The Rossetti children were all gifted. Christina, the youngest, the author of *Goblin Market*, has by many been regarded as a poet not inferior to Mrs. Browning, and the future may yet accord her a place with her brother among permanent representatives of the Pre-Raphaelite group. Rossetti's schooling was obtained wholly in London. At the age of fourteen he was already started on his career as an artist, and for many years, indeed almost throughout his life, he wavered between his devotion to painting and his devotion to poetry. In 1849, he, John Everett Millais, and Holman Hunt exhibited each a picture, the two latter in the Academy, which attracted some attention. The pictures bore the signature "P. R. B.," which was afterward explained to stand for the "Pre-Raphaelite

Brotherhood." The name was not a very exact one. They employed it mainly to signify their protest against the conventionality from which painting had more or less suffered since the influence of Raphael and other masters had been dominant. They desired to get back to a freer spirit, a spirit of devotion and enthusiasm for their subjects, and at the same time to observe greater faithfulness in the execution of details. This was quite in accord with the ideas Ruskin was already proclaiming, and when Ruskin learned of the work of this youthful group he immediately exerted his influence in their behalf. The three artists developed in the course of time very different manners, to which it would be impossible to attach any single name. But the fervor with which they preached and illustrated their early faith had a marked effect in revivifying English art. Rossetti and Millais both came to be among the foremost of English painters. Rossetti was never a correct or patient draughtsman, but as a colorist he has hardly been excelled since Titian; and a certain æsthetic manner, seen particularly in the type of languorous female beauty cultivated by himself and Burne-Jones, and in the highly imaginative work of Watts, is one of the distinctive marks of the later Pre-Raphaelitism.

In 1850 the Brotherhood published a little magazine, *The Germ*, in which were printed some of Rossetti's youthful poems, notably *My Sister's Sleep* and *The Blessed Damsel*, the latter beginning with the familiar stanza:—

"The blessed damsel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven."

A conception so novel as this and an execution so sure—though the original draft was somewhat less perfect—should have showed at once that Rossetti was a poet of a high order. In fact *The Blessed Damsel* is to-day his best known poem; nor is it

difficult to understand the fascination exercised by this daring picture of a woman in Paradise possessing all the physical charm of a woman on earth and gazing longingly back to where the lover is whom she must still await. For some years, however, Rossetti continued to pursue poetry with less ardor than painting. In 1860 he married. In 1861 he brought out a volume of translations, *The Early Italian Poets*, intending to follow this with a volume of original work. But his wife died the next year, and in his despondency he laid the still unpublished manuscript in her coffin and allowed it to be buried. At the instigation of his friends it was afterward recovered, and published in 1870. With that date Rossetti's poetic fame began. He even thought then of abandoning painting for poetry. But ill health and despondency overtook him; and a violent and quite unwarranted attack upon the sensuous character of his verse partly dispelled his enthusiasm. In his struggles with insomnia he became a victim to chloral, and his poetic production was sadly interfered with. A collection of his poems was finally made, in two volumes, in the year 1881; but by that time he had become a confirmed recluse, writing almost nothing, and denying himself to all except a few intimate friends. He died in 1882.



"THE BLESSED DAMOZEL."
(From a painting by Rossetti.)

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The very general titles given to Rossetti's two volumes, *Poems*, and *Ballads and Sonnets*, afford about as accurate a classi-

fication of their contents as can be made. It is not easy to select poems for special comment. Doubtless *The Blessed Damozel* will always hold a high place, alike for its originality and its air of sincerity. *A Last Confession*, the story of an Italian patriot who, partly in jealousy and partly to save her from dishonor, kills the girl he has protected and loved, is a powerful dramatic narrative in almost lyrical blank verse. *Dante at Verona* and *The Burden of Nineveh* are loftier themes, treated in solemn, stately style. *Jenny* likewise, beneath an affected lightness of tone, carries an almost appalling seriousness. A single image in it—of lust at the heart of the world

“Like a toad within a stone
Seated while Time crumbles on”—

will serve to illustrate this. The poem presents a realistic picture of London life very different from Rossetti's usual work. On the other hand, *The Stream's Secret* and the long ballad of *Rose Mary* are, though lesser poems, perfect representatives of his naturally romantic and symbolistic method. But the best example of his romantic art, stripped of the excess and affectations that sometimes mar it, is to be seen in the mediæval ballad of *Sister Helen*, an intensely dramatic portrayal of “love grown hate in the heart of a woman.” Finally, to pass over a score of beautiful lyrics like *A New Year's Burden* and *The Song of the Bower*, there is the series of one hundred and one sonnets entitled *The House of Life*, each almost literally as perfect as every other, and all touching the high-water mark of sonnet verse.

Rossetti's poetic manner changed considerably in the course of his life, and there are many who prefer the naïve simplicity and fresh, healthy tone of his early compositions. Certain affectations evidently grew upon him, as, like most of the later poets, he began to cultivate poetry with an ever intenser consciousness and application; yet there is never any taint of insincerity in his devotion. His imagination turned more and more

within. All the wealth of color and form which an artist like himself could command were lavished upon the pictures of his brain, and in his poems as in his paintings there is a mystic union of physical charm with profound spiritual suggestion which is perhaps the keynote of Pre-Raphaelitism as we now understand it. He constantly visualized things which are to most minds abstractions, giving them feet, wings, eyes, and voice, while still denying them the attributes of flesh. At the same time his music deepened to a quality not easily traced to ordinary mechanical devices, an effect particularly observable in such poems as *Insomnia* and *The Stream's Secret*. Virtually all these characteristics meet in the sonnets, each one of which seems the very quintessence of a poet's passion, wrung from his heart in this or that moment of ecstatic love or brooding sorrow. Take, since only one may be taken, the last of the four sonnets called "Willowwood":

"So sang he: and as meeting rose and rose
Together cling through the wind's wellaway
Nor change at once, yet near the end of day
The leaves drop loosened where the heart-stain glows,
So when the song died did the kiss uncloze;
And her face fell back drowned, and was as gray
As its gray eyes; and if it ever may
Meet mine again I know not if Love knows.

Only I know that I leaned low and drank
A long draught from the water where she sank;
Her breath and all her tears and all her soul:
And as I leaned, I know I felt Love's face
Pressed on my neck with moan of pity and grace,
Till both our heads were in his aureole."

Or read "Lovesight," "Without Her," "The Heart of the Night," "The Monochord," "A Superscription." The entire series is a faithful record, "carved as in ivory or in ebony," of the mysterious conjunctions and oppositions wrought by Love, Change, and Fate in the House of Life, and it marks Rossetti

as being in his own mystic fashion one more most subtle "assertor of the Soul in song."

The account of Rossetti given above conveys no proper impression of the force of character which in his early manhood

William

Morris,

1834-1896.

made him a leader in the new æsthetic movement. Striking testimony to this force of character is found in the way in which William Morris, himself a man of strong personality, fell under his spell. Morris, the son of a wealthy merchant, while at Oxford, acquired a taste for mediæval and religious art. There also, he contracted a friendship with Edward Burne-Jones. The two even shared certain monastic views which led them to form a "Brotherhood" to carry on a religious "crusade against the age." Abandoning this, they joined the social crusade of Carlyle and Ruskin. Then Rossetti came across their path and made one of them a great painter. Morris tried hard to paint, but gave it up. He maintained his interest in art, however, organizing a company in 1860 to engage in a general business of church and house decoration, and through his excellent taste and tireless industry, supported by his wealth and business sagacity, he practically revolutionized the decorative art of his time. Later he became an active socialist. He is also celebrated for the beautiful examples of typography which he issued from his printing press at Kelmscott in the last years of his life.

Morris began to write poetry in 1855 and was surprised to find that his friends regarded it as good. In 1858 he published *The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems*. It was the first regular volume of the Pre-Raphaelite school, and, though distinctly original—in no sense an imitation of what Rossetti had done and was doing—it had the characteristics of the school, an atmosphere, that is, of devout sincerity, an air of quaintness and simplicity, a lavish and impressionistic way of using color, and an oddly realistic treatment of remote mediæval themes. It would be easy to quote passages that come dangerously near to nonsense.

"If I move my chair it will scream, and the orange will roll out far,
And the faint yellow juice ooze out like blood from a wizard's jar;
And the dogs will howl for those who went last month to the war."

But it is never quite prose; and certain of the ballads, such as *The Gilliflower of Gold*, and especially the longer Arthurian tales, have, in addition to their romantic glamour, real dramatic power. However, Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* soon showed Morris the uselessness of competition in that field, and in his next volume, *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867), he had recourse to Greek legendary lore. This volume was at once successful, and Morris entirely abandoned lyric and dramatic verse for narrative. He was a most fluent versifier, and he set about rewriting the legends of the past in a simple, straightforward style with no other purpose than to please by the interest that inheres in the tales themselves.

"Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,
Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?
Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme
Beats with light wing against the ivory gate,
Telling a tale not too importunate
To those who in the sleepy region stay,
Lulled by the singer of an empty day."

Thus he proclaims his purpose in the prologue to *The Earthly Paradise* (1868-1870), an extended series of twenty-four tales, half from classical and half from north European sources, which are strung together somewhat after the fashion of Chaucer's great work.

Indeed, Morris was a kind of modern Chaucer, endeavoring to give himself up to poetry with somewhat of the abandonment of the early bards. He only half succeeded. He could not quite forget "the fever and the fret" of his own age, and his lightest-seeming verses take a melancholy tone from the very fact that they are so clearly written in the attempt to forget. In his *Jason*, Orpheus's song of triumph runs:—

"Men say, 'For fear that thou shouldst die
To-morrow, let to-day pass by
Flower-crowned and singing.'"

This pagan creed does not rest lightly on a child of the nineteenth century. But Morris manfully did what he could to brighten his own existence and turn his generation away from its over-serious preoccupations to the pure delights of art and literature. His mystery play of *Love is Enough* (1872), his translations of the *Æneid* and the *Odyssey*, and his fine version of *Sigurd the Volsung* (1876), had the same aim. So also had the seven remarkable prose romances, written in an invented "fifteenth century" dialect, *The House of the Wolfings* (1889), *The Roots of the Mountains* (1890), etc., with which he completed his literary labors. His gaze did not penetrate beyond the present; he saw none of the shadows which, in Rossetti's haunted vision, men's bodies reach over the "sunken beach" of sleep and death. Simply to make the world fairer with noble deeds, and death happier for the recollection of them, was his not unenchanted ideal. And thus he writes of Golden Walter in *The Wood beyond the World*:—

"Now of the deeds that he did, and his joys and his griefs, the tale shall tell no more; nor of how he saw Langton again, and his dealings there. In Stark-wall he dwelt, and reigned a King, well beloved of his folk, sorely feared of their foemen. Strife he had to deal with, at home and abroad; but therein he was not quelled, till he fell asleep fair and softly, when this world had no more of deeds for him to do"

It fell to Algernon Charles Swinburne, the youngest of the Pre-Raphaelites, and the latest to join the group, to attract the first general attention to their poetry. The son of
 Algernon Charles Swinburne, 1837—
 Admiral Charles Henry Swinburne, he was born in London in 1837, and was educated partly in France and partly at Oxford, leaving the latter place in 1860 without taking a degree. Unlike his associates, he did not study art, but devoted himself from the first and almost singly to poetry. His early dramas, *The Queen-*

Mother and Rosamond (1860), dedicated to Rossetti, received slight notice; but the publication in 1865 of *Atalanta in Calydon*, a drama modelled upon the Greek drama, on the subject of one of the lost plays of Æschylus, excited wide interest. The drama was dedicated to the memory of Landor, who had just died in Florence, and of whom the young poet was a great admirer. Perhaps he derived from him something of his own Greek temper. Certainly the *Atalanta*, with its choral passages, its stichomythia, or dialogues in alternate lines of equal length, its severe unity of theme, and its tragic fatalism, reproduces the form and spirit of Greek drama more perfectly than anything else in English. At the same time it is romantically overwrought in phrase and filled with color and music. The last named quality was immediately felt and specially recognized. Never before had anapæstic metres been handled with such ease and intoxicating effect, and there is perhaps to this day nothing of Swinburne better known than the lyrical stanzas of the chorus that follows the invocation of the Chief Huntsman:—

“When the hounds of spring are on winter’s traces,
The mother of months in meadow or plain
Fills the shadows and windy places
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;
And the brown bright nightingale amorous
Is half assuaged for Itylus,
For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,
The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.”

When his first series of *Poems and Ballads* appeared in 1866, with its lyrical dedication to Burne-Jones, the impression already created was only accentuated by the severe censure which some of the poems called forth by their seeming irreverence and immorality. The collection contained not a little early verse, the youthful excesses of which were very reasonably reprehended. At the same time the poet’s mastery of all the resources of verbal music seemed more astonishing than ever.

Readers could not get out of their ears and memory the sound of such lines as

“The sea gives her shells to the shingle,”

or

“In the greenest growth of Maytime,”

or

“Out of the golden remote wild west where the sea without shore is.”

In fact the poet's technique was learned, not only from Shakespeare, Shelley, Landor, and Keats, but also from the Greek Sappho, the Roman Catullus, the French Villon, de Musset, and Hugo, with the result that his lyrics were marvels of composite rhythm and intricate harmony which the whole world's poetry might be challenged to equal. There was clearly a new note in English verse and Swinburne was hailed as an inspired singer of the first rank. His fertility, moreover, proved as great as his facility, and from that time to the end of the century at least every second year brought forth a new drama or a volume of odes and lyrics from his pen. *A Song of Italy* (1867), *Songs before Sunrise* (1871), *Bothwell* (1874), a second and third series of *Poems and Ballads* (1878, 1889), *Songs of the Spring-Tides* (1880), and *Tristram of Lyonesse* (1882), may be instanced. Among separate poems perhaps *A Song in the Time of Order*, *A Match*, *The Garden of Proserpine*, *Hesperia*, *A Forsaken Garden*, *Thalassius*, *On the Cliffs*, *A Child's Laughter*, *Ode on the Proclamation of the French Republic*, may be selected for mention, but there are scores of others equally deserving. He wrote several volumes of prose—*Essays and Studies* (1875), *A Study of Shakespeare* (1880), etc.—that are remarkable for their poetic style and admirable for their insight and generous appreciation, though seldom for temperance of judgment.

It is clear that Swinburne's expansive genius is not to be defined in a word. He is another eclectic poet like Tennyson, responding to many and diverse influences. In his early poems there is enough of the mediævalism and also of the quaintness and affectation of his friends Rossetti and Morris, to give him

a place in their circle. But there is much more. Side by side with his experiments in Breton ballads and English Miracle Plays are odes, narratives in couplet rhyme, rondels and aubades, sapphics and hendecasyllabics, and even a poem (*Laus Veneris*) in the Oriental quatrains of the *Rubáiyát*. He is at once more Greek and more Elizabethan than any modern poet save Landor, and he is half a dozen things besides. The Elizabethan quality comes out strongest in his dramas, such as *Chastelard* and *Mary Stuart*. They are closet-dramas purely, wanting in action and comic by-play; but they have the great dramatic virtues,—plot, vivid characterization, and intensity of passion in tragic situations, presented through a perfectly-handled blank verse. Tennyson's best work in this kind is not comparable to them.

It is however as a lyric poet that Swinburne, like nearly all the poets of the century, is to be finally judged. Into his lyrics he has put all his own character—his intense hatred, like Shelley's or Landor's, of kings and priests, and his passionate love of freedom, of little children, and of the sea. The expression of his republicanism took often so violent a form, that though at Tennyson's death he was the obvious candidate for the Laureateship, his appointment was out of the question. Many of his best poems in celebration of liberty were inscribed to Joseph Mazzini, the Italian patriot, and still others to Victor Hugo, the great republican poet of France. But his republicanism never diminished his patriotism. When a Russian poet addressed some insolent lines to Victoria, the "Empress of India," he responded with several sonnets upon *The White Czar* in scathing language for which anathema is but a mild word. A similar intemperance was early manifested in his proclamations of a religious faith that seems often candidly and even joyously antichristian. On the other hand, few poets have descended more gracefully from the heights of passionate song to celebrate in simple and musical rhyme the innocent charms of childhood.

"No flower-bells that expand and shrink
Gleam half so heavenly sweet
As shine on life's untrodden brink
A baby's feet

"No rosebuds yet by dawn impearled
Match, even in loveliest lands,
The sweetest flowers in all the world—
A baby's hands."

But these qualities pale before Swinburne's master passion, his love of the sea. Childhood's laughter itself does not ring for him with the joy of the racing waves in sunlight, nor the wrath of man thunder like the thunder of their breaking in storm.

"Green earth has her sons and her daughters,
And these have their guerdons; but we
Are the winds and the suns and the waters',
Elect of the sea."

"Breathe back the benediction of thy sea," "And in thy soul the sense of all the sea," "My dreams to the wind everliving, My song to the sea," "With stars and sea-winds in her raiment, Night sinks on the sea,"—thus in ever varying form and tireless succession his stanzas and poems close with this magical word. Nor is it merely a word to conjure with. The lyrics are permeated and saturated, as no other poetry in the language is, with the actual sounds and scents of the ocean.

Against these virtues must be set the grave defect of the poet's almost fatal fluency. Matthew Arnold complained of him (though somewhat ungraciously, in view of Swinburne's generous praise of Arnold's verse) that he used a hundred words where one would suffice; and the complaint was just. It is true, the defect springs from his quality; the very exuberance of his genius is one of the great things about him and a cause for admiration. He becomes so enamored of his own cunningly woven beauty and music that nothing can arrest his progress. He must have full scope, at whatever sacrifice of clearness and vigor. The result is that readers with little of his whole-souled

delight in these things turn from him in despair. At the same time he remains a splendid example of the poetic temper in its extreme development. Nor can it be forgotten that in the one element of verbal music he attained in his very earliest attempts to a mastery which no one before that would have deemed possible in English, and which is likely to remain long unsurpassed.

The prose writer, Walter Horatio Pater, though not to be regarded as one of the Pre-Raphaelites, was closely allied to them in temper, scarcely differing from them more than they differed from each other. He was not a practitioner of either painting or poetry, but he was a rarely sympathetic student of both, as well as of other arts and of philosophy. He was a student at Oxford at the same time as Swinburne, becoming later a Fellow of Brasenose College, and he passed there, except for a few years spent in London, an unobtrusive, almost unnoticed existence. The attitude of remoteness from the world of men to be seen in the poetry of Keats, Rossetti, and Morris, was his in actuality. One of his earliest pieces of writing was an appreciation of Morris's *Defence of Guenevere*, in a style whose coloring was not unlike that of the poetry appraised, "intricate and delirious as of scarlet lilies." A certain morbidness of taste is easily to be detected in it, as indeed in the whole of the "Æsthetic Movement" which followed at this time, and for which Pater, after the Pre-Raphaelites, was largely responsible. But Pater was never guilty of the excesses and offences into which some later disciples of this movement were led. He pursued his quiet scholarly life, writing slowly and with infinite painstaking, and publishing without thought of notoriety. His *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873), is a collection of critical essays upon Leonardo, Botticelli, Michael Angelo, etc. *Marius the Epicurean* (1885) is a kind of philosophical romance, portraying the spiritual experience of a youth amid the conflicts of philosophy and religion at Rome in the time of

Walter
Horatio
Pater,
1839-1894.

Marcus Aurelius. Among his later books are *Imaginary Portraits* (1887), *Appreciations* (1889), and *Greek Studies* (1895). His best known separate essay is the autobiographic *Child in the House*, written in 1878. An extract from this will serve to illustrate the general tenor of his work:—

“So the child of whom I am writing lived on there quietly; things without thus ministering to him, as he sat daily at the window with the birdcage hanging below it, and his mother taught him to read, wondering at the ease with which he learned, and at the quickness of his memory. The perfume of the little flowers of the lime-tree fell through the air upon them like rain: while time seemed to move ever more slowly to the murmur of the bees in it, till it almost stood still on June afternoons. How insignificant, at the moment, seem the influences of the sensible things which are tossed and fall and lie about us, so, or so, in the environment of early childhood. How indelibly, as we afterwards discover, they affect us; with what capricious attractions and associations they figure themselves on the white paper, the smooth wax, of our ingenuous souls, as ‘with lead in the rock for ever,’ giving form and feature, and as it were assigned houseroom in our memory, to early experiences of feeling and thought, which abide with us ever afterwards, thus, and not otherwise.”

The two things which give Pater distinction are his philosophy and his style. The former, at least in its earlier expressions, is very clearly a kind of refined Epicureanism, or hedonism, —a doctrine of life for the pleasure of life. But with Pater this is not quite the pagan doctrine of self-indulgence it might seem. For he possessed the best qualities of a humanist, holding that the intensest pleasure of life springs from the quickening of the spirit, and finding for himself the avenues to that quickening mainly in literature and art. This is a substitution for religion of at least nothing worse than æstheticism. His style might be expected to conform to his philosophical ideal; and so it does. It is highly colored and musically modulated, and yet never so highly or musically as Ruskin's. It obtains its effects by less obvious means, avoiding the old or commonplace, preferring whatever is subtle, delicate, and elusive. Sometimes it seems utterly nerveless and effeminate. But

its charm, when one has come to feel it, does not pall. It is, moreover, perfectly adjusted to the expression of those things—such, for instance, as the coming or going of bodily pain, or, to take a more specific but perfectly typical example, the “particular catch and throb of heavy blossoms beating against a window peevishly in the wind”—which only an abnormal sensibility like Pater’s can feel in all their gradations of faintness or intensity. It is, in a sense, the ultimate note of romanticism in nineteenth century prose.

Robert Louis Stevenson, a slightly younger contemporary of Pater, was a writer of much wider general appeal. When, in 1870, Rossetti added his volume of poems to those of his disciples, Swinburne and Morris, the Pre-Raphaelites virtually occupied the centre of the literary stage. A short time sufficed to set them more clearly in their proper relation to Tennyson and others. But every generation has its idols, and the next reputation to leap into a position that promised permanence was that of Stevenson. The position has indeed been well maintained; but though the death of the author, which was not unanticipated, speedily came to set a seal upon his work, his life and personality and all the conditions under which his talent flowered are still too near us to permit of anything like final judgment.

Stevenson, baptized Robert Lewis Balfour, the only child of a distinguished civil engineer, was born at Edinburgh in the middle year of the century. When we consider that Scott and Carlyle were also both born in Scotland, that Ruskin’s parents were Scotch, and that Macaulay was Scotch by paternal descent, the share of Scotland in nineteenth century English prose is seen to be almost as great as that of England herself. Stevenson’s literary bent was strong from the first, so that his perfunctory education at the University of Edinburgh and his training for the family profession went for nothing, as did also his preparation for the Law and his admission to the Bar. The

*Robert
Louis
Stevenson,
1850–1894.*

romance in his life sprang from his adventurous and Bohemian spirit and his long search for health. He travelled a great deal, on foot, by canoe, and with a donkey, in Scotland, Belgium, and France. He went to America in 1879, making the ocean voyage in a second cabin little better than steerage, and the trip across the continent to San Francisco in an emigrant train. The next year he married and returned to England. In 1887 he went again to America and shortly afterward began to cruise among the picturesque islands of the Pacific. Finally, in 1890, he bought the estate of Vailima, situated on a mountain-side in the island of Samoa. There he made his home and entered upon the friendliest of relations with the natives, to whom he stood in some sort as a father. Four years later, though his health had seemed much improved, he suddenly died. He was buried by the Samoan chieftains on the summit of Mount Vaea, overlooking the harbor of Apia.

Directly out of this wandering life grew many of Stevenson's books—among the earlier, *An Inland Voyage* (1878) and *Travels with a Donkey* (1879), among the later, *Across the Plains*, *In the South Seas*, *A Footnote to History* (all 1892), and *Vailima Letters* (1895). Besides these personal memoirs he wrote several volumes of general and critical essays, *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881) and *Familiar Studies of Men and Books* (1882), some poems, particularly *A Child's Garden of Verses* (1885), and a large number of romances. Among the last, the highly romantic and sometimes blood-curdling *Treasure Island* (1882) is best known. Others are *Prince Otto* (1885), *Kidnapped* (1886), and *David Balfour* (1893), *The Merry Men* (1887), *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889), and *Island Nights' Entertainments* (1893). With the exception of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), a study in dual personality hardly in Stevenson's manner, his romances have one general character, that of wild adventure, often by sea, with few or no female personages and little of the element of romantic love.

Stevenson's wide popularity is largely due to the fact that he was, as Pater was not, a man of the world. He was less

concerned with the subtle impressions made on the sensitive-plate of the mind than with the infinitely livelier impressions made on the sensitive retina of the eye. His world was the world of action and events. He usually had a story to tell,* and this alone would have assured him of a large audience. But he had, in addition, the faculty of telling his story well. Indeed, the name of Stevenson stands in literature for a style quite as much as for anything. The style, he tells us, was a product of much study and practice and of the imitation of various masters, yet with all its artificiality its mechanism is quite concealed; one comes to know it without knowing how. It shares with Pater's the quality of fastidiousness and avoidance of the stereotyped, but does not push this refinement so far. It is less academic, more racy, as befits the very different purpose it is made to serve. Though difficult to describe, it is easy to illustrate, since the flavor of it lurks in almost every sentence. Take, from *Travels with a Donkey*, this sequel of a night spent in the open air:

"I was soon on the road nibbling a cake of chocolate and seriously occupied with a case of conscience. Was I to pay for my night's lodging? I had slept ill, the bed was full of fleas in the shape of ants, there was no water in the room, the very dawn had neglected to call me in the morning. I might have missed a train, had there been any in the neighborhood to catch. Clearly, I was dissatisfied with my entertainment; and I decided I should not pay unless I met a beggar.

"The valley looked even lovelier by morning; and soon the road descended to the level of the river. Here, in a place where many straight and prosperous chestnuts stood together, making an aisle upon a swarded terrace, I made my morning toilette in the water of the *Tarn*. It was marvellously clear, thrillingly cool; the soap-suds disappeared as if by magic in the swift current, and the white boulders gave one a model for cleanliness. To wash in one of God's rivers in the open air seems to me a sort of cheerful solemnity or semi-pagan act of worship. To dabble among dishes in a bedroom may perhaps make clean the body; but the imagination takes no share in such a

* *Tusitala* ("teller of tales") is the name which was given him by the Samoan natives.

cleansing. I went on with a light and peaceful heart, and sang psalms to the spiritual ear as I advanced.

"Suddenly up came an old woman, who point-blank demanded alms.

" 'Good!' thought I; 'here comes the waiter with the bill.'

"And I paid for my night's lodging on the spot. Take it how you please, but this was the first and the last beggar that I met with during all my tour."

A quality seldom to be dissociated from style is personality. The personality of Stevenson is nearly as marked in its way as that of Charles Lamb, and is nearly as delightful. "Extreme *busyness*," he declares in one of his essays, "whether at school or college, kirk or market, is a symptom of deficient vitality; and a faculty for idleness implies a catholic appetite and a strong sense of personal identity." In this sentence he has almost summed up his own character—his wide curiosity, his buoyant spirits, his unfailing good-fellowship. Pater, we have said, was a humanist, but so was Stevenson, in a very different and more vital sense of the word. Few men have shown a heartier willingness to "breast into the world" and rub off the angularities of character in the face of all sorts of discouragement. There are those who have suspected something of pose in this disposition, just as it is easy to suspect a pose in the preciosity of Stevenson's style. But even if we grant it, it would be uncharitable to call such bravado, so infectious and salutary in its influence, by any other name than virtue. Only in this spirit of charity is it possible to read the beautiful *Requiem* which he wrote, and which is now engraved on his granite tomb:

"Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.
This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill."

CONCLUSION

From the seventh century to the verge of the twentieth; from semi-barbarous Britain to Christian England; from Northumbria to Wessex, from Wessex to London, from London again to the forests of Nottingham, to the lakes of Westmoreland and Cumberland, to Ayrshire, to Edinburgh, to almost every corner of the island kingdom, and finally to a mountain tomb in a far-away island of the South Seas, we have followed the literary record of the English race. Through all its changing forms and faiths, certain characteristics have remained the same. Through Teutonic paganism and Roman Christianity, through Norman feudalism and Celtic romance, through the Renaissance humanism of the sixteenth century, the Puritanism of the seventeenth, the deism of the eighteenth, the mingled individualism and socialism of the nineteenth, may be traced with remarkable distinctness those traits of character which have shaped the ideals and destinies of the people. Among these are an indomitable will and courage to act, a passionate devotion to freedom tempered by a wholesome respect for law, a religious regard for moral purity and humble worth, and a genuine love for external nature in all her aspects, from the formal beauty of lawn and garden to the rugged grandeur of mountain and sea. One and the same spirit informs the epic of those early unknown bards who chanted the deeds of their fathers by the stern North Ocean and the requiem of the modern singer who goes to meet death among tropic palms.

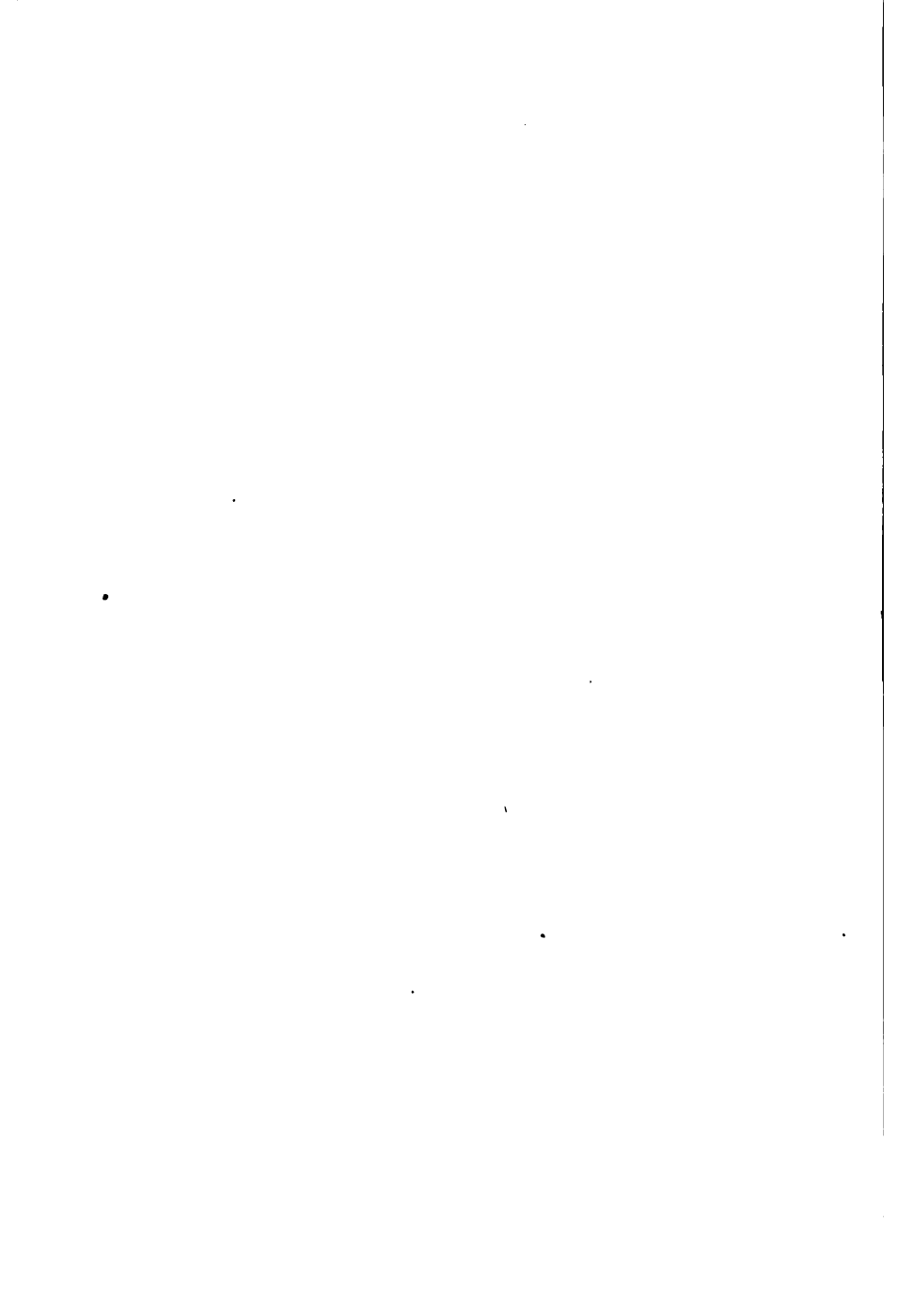
If the record has seemed to close abruptly, it is because there is no real conclusion. It stops, but does not end. Even the nineteenth century, in its literary history, is seen to return upon itself like a cycle. Not very unlike the romanticism which

marked the beginning is that which attends the close. The romances of Scott find a counterpart in the tales of his compatriot Stevenson. From the dream-land of Coleridge, now lighted as by rainbows, now dark with mists, the step is not great to the dream-world of Rossetti, "forlorn of light." Wordsworth's exalted worship of nature is echoed in Tennyson's more sentimental love. The revolutionary idealism and the lyricism of Shelley reappear in the republicanism and the virtuosity of Swinburne. The religion of beauty promulgated by Keats survives in the æsthetic cult of a school.

But even thus, not all the story of the last century has been told. There are moods and tendencies not accounted for here because their chief exponents are still alive, or because their significance may not be clearly defined. Sir Leslie Stephen, perhaps the foremost of the later critics, has just passed away, but no term can be pointed to the kind of activity for which he stood, and which appears to be steadily gathering momentum. In fiction, two divergent tendencies have long been represented by the very diverse personalities of Mr. George Meredith and Mr. Thomas Hardy, the one a satiric psychologist of complex and conventional life, the other a tragic realist of pastoral fold and furrow. Others might easily be named. An entire school of Scotch novelists has threatened to supplant Stevenson; and the preciosity of Pater is undergoing new metamorphoses beneath the hands of Mr. Maurice Hewlett. Perhaps the newest note has been struck by Mr. Rudyard Kipling, whose virile and unconventional tales, brought first from India, are like a fresh revelation of Britain's imperial greatness. Mr. Kipling has proved also a new force in poetry, restoring to it a barbaric energy of rhythm and preaching a gospel of almost brute strength and courage. He has left easily the deepest mark on the rising generation. The more academic poetry finds its foremost representative in the meditative muse of Mr. William Watson; while Mr. Stephen Phillips is cultivating poetical drama with a zeal that is rewarded both in the study and on the stage. Finally

there is a determined movement looking toward a revival of the Celtic spirit in both poetry and prose.

It is idle to ask whither all this tends. There is no reason to think that England, at the beginning of the twentieth century, is passing through a period of any great literary importance. Indeed, there is reason to think rather the contrary. Periods of great literary importance are necessarily few; and with the Elizabethan and Georgian periods behind her, England has standards that are not easily reached. Yet the great achievements with which the last century opened have not been unworthily followed, and though the present may seem to show deterioration, it would be illogical to presage decay. The outlook for the future loses none of its promise.



APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A

NOTES ON THE LANGUAGE

1. DIALECTS

**A CHRONOLOGICAL CHART OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
SHOWING THE RELATIVE LITERARY IMPORTANCE OF THE SEVERAL DIALECTS**

	NORTHERN DIALECT (The early Northumbrian, spoken by the Angles of Northumbria)	MIDLAND DIALECT (The early Mercian, spoken by the Angles of Mercia)	SOUTHERN DIALECT (The early West Saxon, spoken by the Saxons in Wessex, south and west of the Thames)
OLD ENGLISH 700	<i>Beowulf</i> , Cædmon, Cynewulf, Bede (all preserved only in the Southern dialect)		Alfred Ælfric <i>Chronicle</i> (Worcester)
MIDDLE ENGLISH 1100	<i>Cursor Mundi</i>	<i>Chronicle</i> (Peterboro') Orm, Layamon Chaucer, Wyclif Caxton	
MODERN ENGLISH 1500 1900	Dunbar Ramsay Burns Scott	Tyndale Shakespeare Milton Dryden Swift Johnson Burke Coleridge Tennyson	 Barnes

There was also the Kentish dialect, spoken by the Jutes in Kent, but no literature has been preserved in it.

The Northern dialect is now represented by the Lowland Scotch. The dialect of Tennyson's "Northern Farmer" (Lincolnshire, or Yorkshire) is an extreme North Midland, approaching the Northern.

The Midland dialect became in Chaucer's time the standard literary English and has remained such ever since. Even Scotch writers like Burns and Scott employ this when they write "pure English." Old forms of this dialect survive still in rustic speech, and may be met with in dialect literature of the Midland Counties. See the quotation from George Eliot's "Silas Marner" on pages 340-41.

The Southern dialect may be found in the rustic Wiltshire and Dorsetshire dialect poems of William Barnes and the Devonshire dialect of Richard Blackmore's "Lorna Doone."

One general difference between the Northern and the Southern dialects is the more guttural *a* of the Northern, in which *man* is pronounced more nearly *män* or *mon*. Another difference is seen in the northern guttural *k* as opposed to the southern *ch*: *kirk*, *church*; *carl*, *churl*; *Lancaster*, *Winchester*. (See O. F. Emerson's History of the English Language, § 56.) Still other differences appear in the verb; for instance in the Middle English period the inflection of the third person present indicative of the verb was as follows:

	<i>Singular</i> (O.E. singeth)	<i>Plural</i> (O. E. singeth)
Northern	he sing-es	they sing-es
East Midland (Chaucer)	sing-eth	sing-en
West Midland	sing-es	sing-en
Southern	sing-eth	sing-eth

The Northern dialect was the least conservative, rapidly losing its inflectional forms.

2. INFLECTIONAL CHANGES.

The Old English was a pretty fully inflected language, like the German of to-day. The present indicative of the verb was inflected thus:

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
1 sing-e	sing-ath
2 sing-est	sing-ath
3 sing-eth	sing-ath

The transition to Middle English was marked by a weakening and levelling of inflections. In especial, *-en* and *-e* gradually supplanted many Old English forms, *-en* becoming the regular plural ending of the verb in the Midland dialect. *To* became regularly attached to the infinitive; and the modern present participial form in *-ing* re-

placed the old one in *-ende*. The old grammatical gender, too, by which a word like *wife* could be neuter, or a word like *sun* feminine, gave way to natural gender. Yet another important change that took place late in Middle English times was the substitution of *their* and *them* for the old *her* and *hem*. (See Chaucer, and compare the modern colloquial "See 'em go.")

In Modern English the *e* dropped out of the genitive singular and the plural of most nouns and the third singular of most verbs, thus shortening those forms by a syllable. The preterite *-ed* also ceased to be pronounced as a separate syllable. Other inflectional forms were mostly lost. (We still have a few forms like *oxen*, etc.; and for a dialectal survival of *-en* in the infinitive, see the extract from "Silas Marner" on page 341.) Inflectional *-e* final became entirely silent and was generally dropped. The pronoun *ye* became objective as well as nominative; *its* began to appear (there are ten instances of it in Shakespeare). The Northern *-s* third singular present indicative encroached rapidly on the East Midland and Southern *-th*.

3. THE VOCABULARY.

The fundamentally Teutonic or Germanic character of the English language may be seen by comparing a few simple modern English and German words:

ENGLISH	<i>one</i>	<i>thou</i>	<i>by</i>	<i>and</i>	<i>home</i>	<i>good</i>	<i>help</i>
GERMAN	<i>ein</i>	<i>du</i>	<i>bei</i>	<i>und</i>	<i>heim</i>	<i>gut</i>	<i>helfen</i>

Latin influence began at once when the Angles and Saxons came into contact with the partly Romanized Britons, and it was greatly strengthened by the introduction of Christianity. A few Celtic words (such as *crag*, *cart*, *cradle*) were taken up, and a slight Norse element (e.g., *keel*, *stern*, *tackle*, *harbor*, *thrall*) came in with the Danes. The next great influence, however, was the Romance, or French influence. This began about the time of the Norman conquest, but more conspicuous than the influence of the Norman French was the influence of Parisian French, both because of its literature and because the French of the English court became after the loss of Normandy, Parisian French. Large numbers of Romance words were borrowed between 1300 and 1500 and many of them still remain. Examples are: *prison*, *castle*, *court*, *realm*, *royal*, *frailty*, *gentle*, *course*, *voyage*, *joy*, *damsel*, *deceive*, etc. Then, at the time of the Renaissance, about the beginning of the Modern English period, Latin

influence received a fresh impetus, and Greek, Italian, and Spanish influences were also speedily felt. The result is that the English vocabulary of the present day is extremely composite.

The extent to which the Teutonic framework has been overlaid with words and forms of Latin and Romance origin may be seen by italicising the foreign elements in any sentence; for example: "*Latin influence became conspicuous* from the time of the *conversion* of the English to *Christianity* at the end of the sixth *century*." In fact, about three-fourths of the vocabulary of the Anglo-Saxons has entirely disappeared, along with much of the grammatical structure, yet that part which has remained is so important and fundamental that a count of *all* the words (not merely the different words) which we use in any given speech, will show the words of native origin to be largely in excess. In writers like Gibbon and Johnson of the eighteenth century, when a Latinized diction was especially favored, the percentage of the native element is never below 70, while in Tennyson it is 88, in Shakespeare 90, and in the Bible 94. It will be interesting in this connection to compare several versions of the New Testament made at different periods. See also the footnote on page 81.

4. PARALLEL TRANSLATIONS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

MATTHEW 25 : 24-30

VULGATE. ABOUT A. D.
383ANGLO-SAXON VERSION.
CORPUS MS.
BEFORE A. D. 1000WYCLIF'S TRANSLATION,
1380

Accedens autem et unum talentum sumens, ait: Domine, scio te quia durus es homo, metens ubi non seminasti, et congregans ubi non sparsisti: et timore percussus, abiens abscondi talentum tuum in terra: ecce habes tuum. Respondens autem dominus ejus, dixit ei: Male serve et piger, sciebas quia meto ubi non seminavi, et congrego ubi non sparsi. Oportuit ergo te jacere argentum meum menariis: et veniens ego recepissem utique meum cum usura. Tollite itaque ab eo talentum, et date habenti decem talenta. Nam habenti omni dabitur, et augebitur: a vero non habente, et quod videtur habere, auferetur ab eo. Et inutilem servum ejicite in tenebras exteriores: illic erit fletus et fremitus dentium.

Tha com se the thaet an pund underfeng and cwæth, Hlaford, ic wat thaet thu eart heard mann: thu ripst thaer thu ne seowe, and gaderast thaer thu ne sprengdest: and ic ferde ofdræd, and behydde thin pund on eorþan: her thu hæfst thaet thin ys. Tha andswarode hys hlaford him and cwæth, Thu yfela theow and slawa: thu wistest thaet ic rype thaer ic ne sawe, and ic gaderige thaer ic ne stredde: hyt gebyrede thaet thu befæstest min feoh mynsterum, and ic name thaenne ic come thaet min ys mid tham gafole. Anymath thaet pund æt hym, and syllath tham the me tha tyn pund brohte. Witodlice ælcon thæra the hæfth man sylth and he hæfth genoh: tham the næfth thaet hym thincth thaet he hæbbe, thaet hym byth ætbrodyn. And wurpath thone unnyt-tan theowan on tha uttran thystru, thaer byth wop and totha gristbitung.

But he that hadde take o besaunt, cam and seide, Lord, I woot that thou art an hard man: thou repist where thou hast not sowe, and thou gaderist togidre where thou hast not sprad abroad: and I dredynge wente and hidde thi besaunt in the erthe: lo, thou hast that that is thin. His lord answeride, and seide to hym, Yvel servaunt and slouth: wistist thou that I repe where I seew not, and gadere togidre where I spradde not abroad: therfore it bihoved thee to bitake my monei to chaungers, that whanne I cam I schulde resceyve that that is myn with usuris. Therfor take away fro hym the besaunt, and yeve to hym that hath ten besauntis. For to every man that hath, me schal yeve, and he schal encrease: but fro hym that hath not, also that that he semeth to have schal be takun away fro hym. And caste ye out the unprofitable servaunt in to uttirmore derknessis, there schal be wepyng and grytynge of teeth.

[NOTE.—In the foregoing transliteration the character thorn of the Anglo-Saxon original has been replaced by its modern equivalent, *th*, to facilitate comparison.]

TYNDALE'S TRANSLATION, 1534

AUTHORISED
(KING JAMES) VERSION, REVISED VERSION, 1881.
1611.

Then he which had receaved the one talent, came and sayd, Master, I considered that thou wast an harde man, which repest where thou sowedst not, and gadderest where thou strawedst not, and was therefore afrayde, and went and hyd thy talent in the erth: behold, thou hast thyn awne. His master answered and sayde unto him, Thou evyll servaunt and slewthfull, thou knewest that I reape where I sowed not, and gaddre where I strawed not: thou oughtest therefore to have had my money to the chaungers, and then at my comynge shulde I have receaved myn awne with vauntage. Take therefore the talent from him, and geve it unto him which hath .v. talentes. For unto every man that hath shalbe geven, and he shall have abundance: and from him that hath not, shalbe taken awaye even that he hath. And cast that unprofitable servaunt into utter dercknes: there shalbe wepyng and gnasshing of teeth.

24. Then he which had received the one talent, came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sowed, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

25. And I was afraid, and went and hidde thy talent in the earth: loe, there thou hast that is thine.

26. His lord answered, and said unto him, Thou wicked and slouthfull servant, thou knewest that I reape where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

27. Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my comming I should have received mine owne with usury.

28. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

29. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, shall be taken away, even that which he hath.

30. And cast yee the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

And he also that had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou didst not sow, and gathering where thou didst not scatter; lo, thou hast thine own. But his lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reape where I sowed not, and gather where I did not scatter; thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received back mine own with interest. Take ye away therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him that hath the ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away. And cast ye out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The verse numbering was introduced in the year 1551.

APPENDIX B

1. CHRONOLOGICAL CHART OF PRINCIPAL WRITERS

1500 SIXTEENTH CENTURY 1600 SEVENTEENTH CENTURY 1700 EIGHTEENTH CENTURY 1800 NINETEENTH CENTURY 1900

ELIZABETHAN	PURITAN	RESTORATION	QUEEN ANNE	GEORGIAN	VICTORIAN
03 Wyatt 42					
17 Surrey 47					
52 Spenser 99					
54 Sidney 86					
64 Marlowe 93					
64 Shakespeare 16					
73? Ben Jonson 37					
91	Herrick 74				
	08 Milton 74				
	18 Cowley 67				
	31 Dryden 00				
		88	Pope 44		
			00 Thomson 48		
			16 Gray 71		
			21 Collins 59		
			28 Goldsmith 74		
			31 Cowper 00		
			59 Burns 96		
			70 Wordsworth 50		
			71 Scott 32		
			72 Coleridge 34		
			88 Byron 24		
15 Ascham 68					
54? Lyly 06					
54 Hooker 00					
61 Bacon					
	26				
	Walton 83				
	05 Browne 82				
	13 Taylor 67				
	28 Bunyan 88				
	59	De lae 31			

67	Swift	45	92	Shelley	22
72	Addison	19	95	Keats	21
89	Richardson	61	09	Tennyson	92
07	Fielding	54	12	Browning	89
09	Dr. Johnson	84	22	Arnold	88
13	Sterne	68	28	Rossetti	82
28	Goldsmith	74	34	Morris	96
29	Burke	97	37	Swinburne	
37	Gibbon	94			
71	Scott	32			
75	Austen	17			
75	Lamb	34			
75	Landor	64			
85	De Quincey	59			
95	Carlyle	81			
00	Macaulay	59			
01	Newman	90			
11	Thackeray	63			
12	Dickens	70			
16	Bronië	55			
19	George Eliot	80			
19	Ruskin	00			
22	Arnold	88			
25	Huxley	95			
39	Pater	94			
50	Stevenson	94			

NOTE.—The upper series in this table consists of poets and dramatists, the dramatists being indicated by Italics. The lower series consists of prose writers, the novelists being indicated by Italics. The name of Goldsmith, for example, is half italicised in both series, to indicate the varied character of his work.

2. LIST OF MINOR AUTHORS AND THEIR CHIEF WORKS.

THE ELIZABETHAN AGE.

POETS.

(See text for Sackville, Spenser, Sidney.)

(BEFORE 1600.)

- George Gascoigne, 1525?-1577. *The Steel Glass*, 1576.
 Thomas Watson, 1557?-1592. *Hecatopathia, or Passionate Century of Love*, 1582.
 Samuel Daniel, 1562-1619. *Sonnets to Delia*, 1592.
 George Chapman, 1559?-1634. *Completion of Marlowe's Hero and Leander*, 1598; *Translation of the Iliad and the Odyssey*, 1598-1615.
 Michael Drayton, 1563-1631. *Idea's Mirror (sonnets)*, 1594; *Ballad of Agincourt*, c. 1605; *Polyolbion*, 1613-1622; *Nymphidia*, 1627.

(AFTER 1600.)

- Thomas Campion, d. 1619. *Book of Airs*, 1601, etc.
 Giles Fletcher, 1588?-1623. *Christ's Victory and Triumph*, 1610.
 William Browne, 1591-1643? *Britannia's Pastorals*, 1613-1616.
 George Wither, 1588-1667. *Satires, Hymns, etc.*, 1613 onward.
 Phineas Fletcher, 1582-1650. *The Purple Island*, 1633.
 John Donne, 1573-1631. *Divine Poems, Sonnets, etc.*, collected 1633.

DRAMATISTS.

(See text for Marlowe, Shakespeare, Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Webster.)

(BEFORE 1600.)

- John Lyly, 1554?-1606. *Alexander and Campaspe*, 1584, and other court comedies, mostly in prose.
 George Peele, 1558?-1597? *The Arraignment of Paris*, 1584, and other masques and plays.
 Robert Greene, 1560?-1592. *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, acted 1594, and other romantic plays, novels, etc.

(AFTER 1600.)

- George Chapman, 1559?-1634. *All Fools*, acted 1599, and other comedies; *Bussy d'Ambois*, 1607, and other tragedies.
 Thomas Middleton, 1570?-1627. *The Roaring Girl* (with Dekker), 1611; *The Changeling* (with Rowley), acted 1621; *Women, Beware Women*, etc.

Thomas Dekker, 1570?-1641? *Fortunatus*, 1600, etc.

John Marston, 1575?-1634. *What You Will*, 1607, etc.

Thomas Heywood, c. 1575-1650. *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, 1603, etc.

Cyril Tourneur, 1575?-1626. *The Revenger's Tragedy*, 1607, etc.

Philip Massinger, 1583-1640. *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, 1632, etc.

John Ford, fl. 1639. *The Broken Heart*, 1633, etc.

James Shirley, 1596-1666. *The Traitor*, 1631, etc.

PROSE WRITERS.

(See text for Lyly, Sidney, Hooker, Bacon, Burton.)

Richard Hakluyt, 1552?-1616. *Navigations, Voyages, and Discoveries*, 1589.

Sir Walter Raleigh, 1552?-1618. *The Discovery of Guiana*, 1596; *History of the World*, 1614.

Thomas Lodge, 1558?-1625. *Rosalind*, 1590, a romance; also a play, poems, and miscellaneous work.

Thomas Nash, 1567-1601. *Pierce Penniless*, 1592, a satire; *The Unfortunate Traveller*, 1594, a novel of adventure; etc.

Also Spenser, Greene, Dekker, etc.

CAROLINE AND PURITAN PERIOD. AGE OF MILTON.

MIDDLE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

POETS.

(See text for Crashaw, Herrick, Cowley, Milton.)

George Herbert, 1593-1633. *The Temple*, c. 1631 (printed 1652.)

Francis Quarles, 1592-1644. *Emblems, Divine and Moral*, 1635.

Henry Vaughan, 1622-1695. *Poems*, 1646.

Thomas Carew, 1598?-1639? *Poems*, 1640.

Sir John Suckling, 1609-1642. *Fragmenta Aurea*, 1646.

Richard Lovelace, 1618-1658. *Lucasta*, 1649.

Sir William Davenant, 1606-1668. *Gondibert*, 1651; also plays, masques, and operas.

Andrew Marvell, 1621-1678. *Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland*, written 1650.

Edmund Waller, 1606-1687. *Poems* (many in the "new" couplet), 1645.

Sir John Denham, 1615-1669. *Cooper's Hill* (in couplets), 1642.

PROSE WRITERS.

(See text for Taylor, Browne, Walton, Milton.)

Thomas Hobbes, 1588-1679. *Leviathan*, 1651.James Howell, 1594?-1666. *Epistolæ Ho-Elianæ*, 1645-1655.Thomas Fuller, 1608-1661. *Church History*, 1655; *Worthies of England*, 1662.Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, 1609-1674. *History of the Great Rebellion*, published 1702-1704.

THE RESTORATION PERIOD. AGE OF DRYDEN.

1660-1700.

(See text for Butler, Pepys, Bunyan, Dryden.)

DRAMATISTS (mostly comic).

Thomas Otway, 1652-1685. *Don Carlos* (in couplets), 1676; *Venice Preserved* (a blank verse tragedy), 1682; etc.Sir George Etherege, 1635?-1691. *She Would if She Could*, 1667; *The Man of Mode*, 1676; etc.William Wycherley, 1640?-1716. *The Country Wife*, 1675; *The Plain Dealer*, 1677; etc.William Congreve, 1670-1729. *Love for Love*, 1695; *The Mourning Bride* (a tragedy), 1697; *The Way of the World*, 1700; etc.Sir John Vanbrugh, 1664-1726. *The Relapse*, 1696; etc.George Farquhar, 1678-1707. *The Constant Couple*, 1700; etc.

PROSE WRITERS.

John Evelyn, 1620-1706. *Diary* [1641-1697], published 1818.Sir William Temple, 1628-1699. *Essays*, 1680, 1692.Sir Isaac Newton, 1642-1727. *Principia* (Latin), 1687.John Locke, 1632-1704. *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, 1690; etc.Jeremy Collier, 1650-1726. *Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*, 1698.Richard Bentley, 1662-1742. *Dissertation on the Letters of Phalaris*, 1699.

AGE OF SWIFT AND POPE.

1700-1740.

POETS.

(See text for Swift, Young, and Pope.)

Matthew Prior, 1664-1721. *Poems* (occasional pieces, epigrams, etc.) 1709.

- Thomas Parnell, 1679-1718. Poems (The Hermit, in heroics, 1710; Hymn to Contentment, in octosyllabics, etc.), collected 1721.
- John Gay, 1685-1732. Shepherd's Week (satirical eclogues), 1714; Trivia, 1716; Fables, 1727; Beggar's Opera, 1728.
- Isaac Watts, 1674-1748. Hymns, 1707; Divine Songs, 1715.
- Allan Ramsay (Scottish), 1686-1758. The Gentle Shepherd (a pastoral drama), 1725. Also songs in dialect.

PROSE WRITERS.

(See text for Swift, Steele, and Addison—Defoe in a succeeding chapter.)

- Earl of Shaftesbury (Anthony Ashley Cooper), 1671-1713. Characteristics of Men, Manners, etc., 1711.
- John Arbuthnot, 1667-1735. History of John Bull, a satirical allegory, 1712.
- Viscount Bolingbroke (Henry St. John), 1678-1751. Reflections upon Exile (written 1716), 1735; Letters to Sir Wm. Windham (written 1717), 1753; etc.
- George Berkeley (Bishop), 1685-1753. Treatise Concerning Human Knowledge, 1710; Alciphron, 1732.
- Joseph Butler (Bishop), 1692-1752. Sermons, 1726; Analogy of Religion, 1736.

AGE OF JOHNSON AND BURKE.

1740-1798.

(See text for the novelists, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne, and for Johnson, Goldsmith, Sheridan, Gibbon, Burke, Thomson, Collins, Gray, "Ossian," Chatterton, Cowper, Crabbe, Blake, and Burns.)

POETS.

- William Shenstone, 1714-1763. The Schoolmistress, 1737.
- John Wesley, 1703-1791. Psalms and Hymns (with his brother Charles), 1738.
- Robert Blair, 1699-1746. The Grave, 1743.
- Mark Akenside, 1721-1770. Pleasures of the Imagination, 1744.
- Charles Churchill, 1731-1764. The Rosciad, 1761; The Ghost, 1762; and other satires.
- James Beattie, 1735-1803. The Minstrel, 1771-1774.

PROSE WRITERS.

- David Hume, 1711-1776. Essays Moral and Political, 1741-1742; History of England, 1754-1762.
- William Robertson, 1721-1793. History of Scotland, 1759.
- Thomas Warton, 1728-1790. History of English Poetry, 1774-1781.
- Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, 1689-1762. Letters, 1763.

- "Junius" (Sir Philip Francis? 1740-1818). Letters, 1768-1773.
 Lord Chesterfield (Philip Dormer Stanhope), 1694-1773. Letters to his Son, 1774.
 Adam Smith, 1723-1790. Wealth of Nations, 1776.
 William Paley, 1743-1805. Moral and Political Philosophy, 1785.
 Gilbert White, 1720-1793. Natural History of Selborne, 1789.
 James Boswell, 1740-1795. Life of Doctor Johnson, 1791.

WRITERS OF FICTION.

- Horace Walpole, 1717-1797. The Castle of Otranto, 1764; Letters.
 Henry Mackenzie, 1745-1831. The Man of Feeling, 1771, etc.
 Frances Burney (Madame d'Arblay), 1752-1840. Evelina, 1778; Cecilia, 1782; Camilla, 1796; The Wanderer, 1814; Diary and Letters, 1842-1846.
 William Beckford, 1759-1844. Vathek, 1784.
 Ann Radcliffe, 1764-1823. A Sicilian Romance, 1790; The Mysteries of Udolpho, 1794; The Italian, 1797.
 William Godwin, 1756-1836. Political Justice, 1793; The Adventures of Caleb Williams, 1794.

AGE OF WORDSWORTH AND SCOTT.

1798-1840.

POETS.

(See text for Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Southey, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Landor, Moore, and Campbell.)

- Samuel Rogers, 1763-1855. Pleasures of Memory, 1792; Italy, 1822.
 Leigh Hunt, 1784-1859. The Story of Rimini, 1816.
 Bryan Waller Procter ("Barry Cornwall"), 1787-1874. Songs, 1832.
 John Keble, 1792-1866. The Christian Year, 1827.
 George Darley, 1795-1846. Sylvia, 1827; Nepenthe, 1839.
 Thomas Hood, 1799-1845. Odes and Addresses, 1825. Song of the Shirt, 1843.
 Winthrop Mackworth Praed, 1802-1839. "Society verse," etc., collected 1844.
 Thomas Lovell Beddoes, 1803-1849. The Bride's Tragedy, written 1819; Death's Jest Book, begun 1825, published 1850.

NOVELISTS.

(See text for Scott and Jane Austen.)

- Maria Edgeworth, 1767-1849. Castle Rackrent, 1800; Moral Tales, 1801; etc.

Jane Porter, 1776-1850. Thaddeus of Warsaw, 1803; Scottish Chiefs, 1810.

Thomas Love Peacock, 1785-1866. Headlong Hall, 1816; The Misfortunes of Elphin, 1829; etc.

Frederick Marryat, 1792-1848. The Naval Officer, 1829; Mr. Midshipman Easy, 1836; etc.

ESSAYISTS, HISTORIANS, ETC.

(See text for Coleridge, Southey, Lamb, De Quincey, Landor, and Macaulay.)

Francis Jeffrey, 1773-1850. Contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*.

Sydney Smith, 1771-1845. Letters of Peter Plymley, 1807.

William Hazlitt, 1778-1830. The Characters of Shakespeare's Plays, 1817; Lectures on English Poets, 1818; Spirit of the Age, 1825; etc.

Leigh Hunt, 1784-1859. London Journal, 1834-35; Imagination and Fancy, 1844; etc.

John Wilson ("Christopher North"), 1785-1854. Noctes Ambrosianæ, contributed to Blackwood's, 1822-35.

John Gibson Lockhart, 1794-1854. Life of Burns, 1828; Life of Scott, 1838.

Henry Hallam, 1777-1859. Europe during the Middle Ages, 1818; Constitutional History of England, 1827; Introduction to the Literature of Europe, 1837-39.

Henry Hart Milman, 1791-1868. History of Christianity, 1840, 1855; etc.

THE VICTORIAN AGE.

1830-1880.

POETS.

(See text for Tennyson, Browning, Mrs. Browning, Fitzgerald, Arnold, and Clough.)

William Barnes, 1801-1886. Poems in Dorset Dialect, 1844.

Robert Stephen Hawker, 1803-1875. Cornish Ballads and other Poems, 1869.

Richard Hengist Horne, 1803-1884. Death of Marlowe (tragedy), 1837; Orion (epic), 1843; etc.

Philip James Bailey, 1816-1902. Festus (drama), 1839.

Sydney Dobell, 1824-1874. The Roman, 1850; Balder, 1853 (closet dramas).

Frederick Locker-Lampson, 1821-1895. London Lyrics, 1857.

Coventry Patmore, 1823-1896. The Angel in the House, 1854-1862.

NOVELISTS.

(See text for Disraeli, Bulwer-Lytton, Dickens, Thackeray, Reade, Trollope, Kingsley, Charlotte Brontë, and George Eliot.)

- Samuel Lover, 1797-1868. Rory O'More, 1837; Handy Andy, 1842.
 Charles James Lever, 1806-1872. Harry Lorrequer, 1839; Charles O'Malley, 1840; etc.
 Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell, 1810-1865. Mary Barton, 1848; Cranford, 1853; etc.
 Emily Jane Brontë, 1818-1848. Wuthering Heights, 1848.
 Anne Brontë, 1820-1849. Tenant of Wildfell Hall, and Agnes Grey, 1848.
 Dinah Maria Mulock (Mrs. Craik), 1826-1887. John Halifax, Gentleman, 1857.
 William Wilkie Collins, 1824-1889. The Dead Secret, 1857; The Woman in White, 1860; The Moonstone, 1868; etc.
 Henry Kingsley, 1830-1876. Geoffrey Hamlyn, 1859; Ravenshoe, 1861; etc.
 Richard Doddridge Blackmore, 1825-1900. Clara Vaughan, 1864; Cradock Nowell, 1866; Lorna Doone, 1869; etc.

PHILOSOPHERS, HISTORIANS, ESSAYISTS, ETC.

(See text for Carlyle, Ruskin, Arnold, Newman, Froude, Spencer, and Huxley.)

- John Stuart Mill, 1806-1873. System of Logic, 1843; Political Economy, 1848; On Liberty, 1859; etc.
 Charles Robert Darwin, 1809-1882. Origin of Species, 1859; The Descent of Man, 1871; etc.
 George Borrow, 1803-1881. The Gypsies in Spain, 1841; The Bible in Spain, 1843; Lavengro, 1851; The Romany Rye, 1857.
 Alexander William Kinglake, 1809-1891. Eothen, 1844; Invasion of the Crimea, 1863-87.
 Henry Thomas Buckle, 1821-1862. History of Civilization in Europe, 1857-61.
 Edward Augustus Freeman, 1823-1892. History of the Norman Conquest, 1867-79; English Constitution, 1872.
 John Richard Green, 1837-1883. Short History of the English People, 1874.

LATER VICTORIANS.

1860-1900.

(See text for Rossetti, Morris, Swinburne, Pater, and Stevenson.)

- Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830-1894. Goblin Market, 1862; etc.
 James Thomson, 1834-1882. The City of Dreadful Night, 1874; etc.

Arthur William Edgar O'Shaughnessy, 1844-1881. The Epic of Women, 1870; Music and Moonlight, 1874.

Sir Edwin Arnold, 1831-1904. Light of Asia, 1878; Light of the World, 1890.

William Ernest Henley, 1849-1903. A Book of Verses, 1888; The Song of the Sword, 1892; Plays (with Stevenson); etc.

John Addington Symonds, 1840-1893. (Historian, essayist, and poet.) The Italian Renaissance, 1875-86; Many Moods, 1878.

Richard Jefferies, 1848-1887. (Writer of prose). The Gamekeeper at Home, 1877; Story of My Heart, 1883.

3. CHRONOLOGY OF THE WORKS OF CHAUCER AND SHAKESPEARE.

CHAUCER, 1340?-1400.

(The dates are mostly conjectural.)

*The Romaunt of the Rose. 1385-86. The Legend of Good

*An A. B. C. Women.

1369. The Book of the Duchesse. 1386-93. The Canterbury Tales.

? Anelida and Arcite. 1391. A Treatise on the Astro-

1377-81. Translation of Boëthius. labe.

1379? The Complaynt of Mars. 1393? The Complaynt of Venus.

1379-83. Troilus and Criseyde. 1399. Envoy to Complaint to his

1382. The Parlement of Foules. Purse.

1383-84. The Hous of Fame.

SHAKESPEARE, 1564-1616.

(The dates of writing—given first—are largely conjectural.)

First Period.

1591. Love's Labour's Lost, pub- 1592. Henry VI., 1594-1623.

lished 1598. 1593. Richard III., 1597.

1591. Two Gentlemen of Verona, 1593. Richard II., 1597.

1623. 1593. Titus Andronicus, 1600.

1592. Comedy of Errors, 1623. 1593. Venus and Adonis, 1593.

1592. Romeo and Juliet, 1597. 1594. Lucrece, 1594.

Second Period.

1594. The Merchant of Venice, 1595. Midsummer Night's Dream,
1600. 1600.

1594. King John, 1623.

* Poems often attributed to Chaucer.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1595. All's Well that Ends Well,
1623. | 1598. Henry V., 1600. |
| 1596. The Taming of the Shrew,
1623. | 1599. Much Ado about Nothing,
1600 |
| 1597. Henry IV., 1598-1600. | 1599. As You Like It, 1623. |
| 1598. Merry Wives of Windsor,
1602. | 1600. Twelfth Night, 1623. |

Third Period.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1601. Julius Cæsar, 1623. | 1606. King Lear, 1608. |
| 1602. Hamlet, 1603. | 1608. Timon of Athens, 1608. |
| 1603. Troilus and Cressida, 1609. | 1608. Pericles, 1609. |
| 1604. Othello, 1622 | 1608. Antony and Cleopatra, 1623. |
| 1604. Measure for Measure, 1623. | 1608. Coriolanus, 1623. |
| 1606. Macbeth, 1623. | ? Sonnets, 1609. |

Fourth Period.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1610. Cymbeline, 1623. | 1612. Henry VIII. (completed by
others), 1623. |
| 1611. Winter's Tale, 1623. | |
| 1611. The Tempest, 1623. | |

4. CLASSIFIED DETAILS OF BIOGRAPHICAL AND LITERARY INTEREST.

Important writers who were born, and who, unless specific statement to the contrary is made, lived in London: Chaucer, More, Spenser, Bacon, Donne, Herrick (l. in Devonshire), Milton, Cowley, Defoe, Pope, Gray (l. Cambridge), Blake, Lamb, Byron (l. Newstead and on the continent), Lytton, Keats, Browning, Ruskin, Rossetti, Swinburne.

Other writers closely associated with London: Sidney, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Walton, Dryden, Pepys, Swift, Steele, Addison, Richardson, Fielding, Johnson, Goldsmith, Burke, Carlyle, Macaulay, Thackeray, Dickens, Morris.

Of Scotch birth or parentage: Dunbar, Drummond, Ramsay, Blair, Thomson, Hume, Robertson, Smollett, Beattie, Macpherson, Mackenzie, Boswell, Campbell, Burns, Hogg, Scott, Lockhart, Wilson, Jeffrey, Carlyle, Ruskin (b. in London), Stevenson. (Macaulay was Scotch on the father's side.)

Of Irish birth or parentage: Swift (b. Dublin), Steele (b. Dublin), Farquhar, Parnell, Berkeley, Goldsmith, Burke (b. Dublin), Sheridan, Hazlitt (b. in England), Moore, Lever, Fitzgerald (b. in England), the Brontës (b. in England).

Of Italian extraction: Rossetti. Of Dutch extraction: Pater.

Of Jewish: Disraeli.

Sovereigns who were men of letters: Alfred, James I. of Scotland (also James I. of England).

Peers of the Realm:

Earls: Surrey, Sackville, Clarendon, Chesterfield, Walpole, Disraeli, Lytton (the younger, Viceroy of India).

Viscounts: Bacon, Bolingbroke.

Barons: Berners, Byron, Macaulay, Lytton (the elder), Tennyson.

Baronets: Scott, Aubrey de Vere.

Knights: Mandeville, Malory, More, Wyatt, Sidney, Raleigh, Overbury, Thomas Browne, Suckling, Temple, Etherege, Vanbrugh, Steele, Leslie Stephen.

In humble occupations: Bunyan (tinker), Allan Ramsay (wig-maker), Burns (farmer and ale-gauger), Lamb (clerk).

Of humble birth. Latimer, Shakespeare, Samuel Butler, Beattie, and Burns were sons of farmers, Marlowe the son of a shoemaker, Webster and Pepys the sons of tailors, Bunyan the son of a tinker, Pope the son of a linen draper, Collins the son of a hatter, Keats the son of a livery-stable keeper, Carlyle the son of a stone-mason. Others of obscure birth were Jonson, Defoe, Crabbe, Dickens.

Tories: Dryden, Prior, Parnell, Swift, Johnson, John Wilson, Scott, etc.

Whigs: Defoe (a professed Tory), Addison, Steele, Chesterfield, "Junius," Burke, Godwin, Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, Macaulay, etc.

Roman Catholics (since the time of the reformation): Lodge, Marlowe, Jonson (for a time), Donne (in early life), Crashaw (in latter life), Dryden (after 1686), Wycherley, Pope, Moore, Newman (after 1845), Hawker (in late life), Patmore (after 1864).

Charterhouse Pupils: Crashaw, Addison, Steele, Beddoes, Thackeray. "Blue-coat Boys" (pupils at Christ's Hospital, London): Coleridge, Lamb, Hunt.

STUDENTS AT CAMBRIDGE:

Ascham (St. John's).

Bacon (Trinity).

Bentley (St. J.).

Byron (Trin.).

Chesterfield.

Coleridge (Jesus).

Cowley (Trin.).

Crashaw.

Darwin (Christ's).

Dryden (Trin.).

Fitzgerald (Trin.).	Paley (Christ's).
Fuller.	Pepys (Trin.).
Gascoigne (Trin.).	Praed (Trin.).
Gray (Peterhouse, Pembroke).	Prior (St. J.).
Herbert (Trin.).	Quarles.
Herrick (St. J.).	Skelton.
Jonson (St. J.).	Spenser (Pembroke).
Kinglake (Trin.).	Sterne (Jesus).
Kingsley (Magdalen).	Suckling (Trin.).
Latimer (Christ's).	Taylor.
Lyly (Magd.).	Temple.
Lytton (Trin.).	Tennyson (Trin.).
Macauley (Trin.).	Thackeray (Trin.).
Marlowe.	Walpole.
Marvell (Trin.).	Wordsworth (St. J.).
Milton (Christ's).	White, K. (St. J.).
	Wyatt (St. J.).

STUDENTS AT OXFORD:

Addison (Queen's).	Keble.
Arnold (Balliol).	Landor (Trin.).
Beaumont (Pembroke).	Locke (Christ C.).
Beddoes (Pembroke).	Lockhart (Balliol).
Blackmore.	Lodge (Trin.).
Browne.	Lovelace.
Burton (Christ Church).	Lyly (Magd.).
Butler, Bp.	Marlowe.
Carew.	Massinger.
Clarendon.	Milman.
Clough (Balliol).	Morris.
Collins (Magd.).	Newman (Trin.).
De Quincey.	Otway (Christ C.).
Donne.	Pater (Queen's).
Evelyn (Balliol).	Peele (Christ C.).
Freeman (Trin.).	Percy (Christ C.).
Froude.	Raleigh.
Gibbon (Magd.).	Reade (Magd.).
Green, J. R.	Ruskin (Christ C.).
Hawker.	Selden (Trin.).
Hobbes.	Shelley.
Hooker.	Shenstone.
Johnson (Pembroke).	Sidney (Christ C.).

Skelton.	Wesleys (Christ C.).
Smith, Sydney.	Warton (Trin.).
Southey (Balliol).	White, G.
Steele.	Wilson (Magd.).
Swinburne (Balliol).	Wyclif.
Symonds (Balliol).	Wycherley (Queen's).
Taylor.	Young.
Tupper (Christ C.).	

Students at Edinburgh University: Akenside, Aytoun, Boswell, Carlyle, Darwin, Drummond, Jeffrey, Scott, Stevenson, Thomson. At Glasgow: Campbell, Smollett.

Students at Dublin University: Berkeley, Burke, Congreve, Farquhar, Goldsmith, Lever, Moore, Parnell, Swift.

Poets buried in Westminster Abbey: Chaucer, Spenser, Beaumont, Drayton, Jonson, Cowley, Denham, Davenant, Dryden, Rowe, Prior, Gay, Macpherson ("Ossian"), Campbell, Browning, Tennyson. There are also monuments to many who are buried elsewhere.

Among others buried in the Abbey are: Addison, Doctor Johnson, Macaulay, and Dickens.

Bunyan is buried in Bunhill Fields, Goldsmith in the Temple Church, Milton in St. Giles's, Cripplegate, Shakespeare in Stratford Church, Wordsworth at Grasmere, Keats and Shelley in the Protestant Cemetery at Rome, Thackeray in Kensal Green, Mrs. Browning at Florence, Stevenson on Mt. Vaea, Samoa.

POETS LAUREATE:

1619-37. Jonson.	1757-85. William Whitehead.
1660-68. Davenant.	
1670-89. Dryden.	1785-90. Thomas Warton.
1689-92. Thomas Shadwell.	1790-1813. Henry James Pye.
1692-1715. Nahum Tate.	1813-43. Southey.
1715-18. Nicholas Rowe.	1843-50. Wordsworth.
1718-30. Lawrence Eusden.	1850-92. Tennyson.
	1896- Alfred Austin.
1730-57. Colley Cibber.	

PEN-NAMES AND LITERARY DISGUISES:

Acton Bell, Anne Brontë.	Astræa, Mrs. Behn.
Andrew Morton, Defoe.	Astrophel, Sidney.

Barry Cornwall, Procter.
 Boz, Dickens.
 Christopher (or Kit) North,
 John Wilson.
 Colin Clout, Spenser.
 Currer Bell, Charlotte
 Brontë.
 Democritus, Jr., Burton.
 Elia, Lamb.
 Ellis Bell, Emily Brontë.
 George Eliot, Mrs. Cross.

Isaac Bickerstaff, Swift,
 Steele.
 Junius, Sir Philip Francis.
 Ossian, James Macpherson.
 Owen Meredith, Lytton (the
 younger).
 Samuel Titmarsh, Thack-
 eray.
 Spectator, Addison, Steele,
 etc.
 Thomas Rowley, Chatter-
 ton.
 Waverley, Scott.

SOBRIQUETS:

Ayrshire Plowman, Burns.
 Bard of Avon, Shakespeare.
 English Opium Eater, De
 Quincey.
 Ettrick Shepherd, James
 Hogg.
 Father of Angling, Walton.
 Father of English Poetry
 Chaucer.
 Father of English Prose,
 Ascham.

Grammaticus, Ælfric.
 Philosopher of Highgate,
 Coleridge.
 Recluse of Olney, Cowper.
 Sage of Chelsea, Carlyle.
 Sweet Singer of the Temple,
 Herbert.
 Sweet Swan of Avon, Shake-
 speare.
 The Venerable, Bede.
 Wizard of the North, Scott.

The "Lake School"—residents in the Lake district of Cumberland and Westmoreland — were Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey. De Quincey and John Wilson were associated with them (as was also Lamb), and are sometimes included.

The "Cockney School"—so named by Lockhart—consisted of Hunt, Hazlitt, Shelley, and Keats. Other "Cockneys"—so named because associated with these or with the London Magazine—were Byron, Lamb, De Quincey, Hood, Procter, Beddoes and later Dickens.

The "Spasmodic School": Philip James Bailey, Alexander Smith, Gerald Massey, Sidney Dobell, etc.

Poets distinguished also as writers of prose: Chaucer, Sidney, Ben Jonson, Milton, Dryden, Cowper (*Letters*), Coleridge, Wordsworth (*Prefaces*), William Morris, Swinburne. Among other poets who wrote prose were Spenser, Gray, Blake, Shelley, Moore, Fitzgerald, Rossetti.

Prose writers distinguished also as poets: Addison, Johnson, Scott, Macaulay, Kingsley. Among other prose writers who wrote verse were Swift, Hunt, Newman, Thackeray, Lytton, George Eliot, Ruskin, Symonds, Stevenson.

Writers about equally distinguished in poetry and prose: Donne, Cowley, Goldsmith, Southey, Landor, Arnold.

HOMES OF AUTHORS:

Abbotsford, Scott.	New Place, Shakespeare.
Aldworth (Surrey), Tennyson.	Newstead Abbey, Byron.
Brantwood, Ruskin.	Kelmscott, Morris.
Down Hall, Prior.	Kilcolman, Spenser.
Farringford (Isle of Wight), Tennyson.	Penshurst, Sidney.
Gadshill Place, Dickens.	Rydal Mount, Wordsworth.
Greta Hall, Southey.	Shandy Hall, Sterne.
Llanthony Abbey, Landor.	Strawberry Hill, Walpole.
Moor Park, Temple.	The Pines, Swinburne.
	Vailima, Stevenson.
	Villa Gherardesca, Landor.

APPENDIX C.

1. BIBLIOGRAPHY.

GENERAL WORKS OF REFERENCE.

HISTORY. Gardiner's Student's History of England. Green's Short History of the English People. Terry's History of England for Schools. Traill's Social England.

LANGUAGE. Marsh's Lectures on the English Language. Lounsbury's English Language. O. F. Emerson's History of the English Language. Greenough and Kittredge's Words and Their Ways in English Speech.

LITERARY HISTORY. General: Saintsbury's A Short History of English Literature. Gosse's A Short History of Modern English Literature. Garnett and Gosse's English Literature: An Illustrated Record; four volumes. Taine's History of English Literature. Ryland's Chronological Outlines of English Literature (tabulated names and dates only).

LITERARY HISTORY. Special Periods and Departments:

Brooke's History of Early English Literature. The history of English poetry to the accession of King Alfred, 871.
Brooke's English Literature from the Beginning to the Norman Conquest.

Ten Brink's History of English Literature. Two volumes. To the death of Surrey.

Morley's English Writers. Eleven volumes. Down to and through Shakespeare and his time.

Saintsbury's History of Elizabethan Literature. 1560-1660.

Gosse's History of Eighteenth Century Literature. 1660-1780.

Saintsbury's History of Nineteenth Century Literature. 1780-1895.

Courthope's History of English Poetry.

Ward's A History of English Dramatic Literature. Three volumes.

Herford's Age of Wordsworth.

Walker's Age of Tennyson.

BIOGRAPHY.

Dictionary of National Biography.

Encyclopædia Britannica.

English Men of Letters Series. Contains biographies of:

Addison	Cowper	Hobbes	Ruskin
Arnold	Crabbe	Hume	Scott
Bacon	Defoe	Johnson	Shelley
Bentley	De Quincey	Keats	Sheridan
Browning	Dickens	Lamb	Sidney
Bunyan	Dryden	Landor	Southey
Burke	Eliot (George)	Locke	Spenser
Burney	Fielding	Macaulay	Sterne
Burns	Fitzgerald	Milton	Swift
Byron	Gibbon	Moore	Taylor
Carlyle	Goldsmith	Pope	Tennyson
Chaucer	Gray	Richardson	Thackeray
Coleridge	Hazlitt	Rossetti	Wordsworth

Great Writers Series. Contains biographies of:

Austen (Jane)	Coleridge	Hunt(Leigh)	Scott
Brontë (Charlotte)	Congreve	Johnson	Shelley
Browning	Crabbe	Keats	Sheridan
Bunyan	Darwin	Marryat	Smith(Adam)
Burns	Dickens	Mill	Smollett
Byron	Eliot(George)	Milton	Thackeray
Carlyle	Goldsmith	Rossetti	

COLLECTIONS AND SELECTIONS.

Chalmer's British Poets from Chaucer to Cowper. Twenty-one volumes.

Ward's The English Poets. Selections, with critical introductions. Four volumes, Chaucer to Tennyson.

Craik's English Prose. Similar to the last. Five volumes.

Arber's British Anthologies, 1401-1800. Ten volumes with glossaries.

Palgrave's Golden Treasury. Songs and lyrical poems only, with notes.

Stedman's British Anthology. Selections from over three hundred nineteenth century poets, with compact biographical notes.

Page's British Poets of the Nineteenth Century. Extended selections from the fifteen foremost poets.

SINGLE VOLUME EDITIONS OF THE POETS.

- Cambridge Edition. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Edited, with introductions, dates, notes, glossaries, etc. Contains Ballads (English and Scottish, Child). E. B. Browning, Robert Browning, Burns, Keats, Milton, Scott, Shelley, Tennyson, Wordsworth. In preparation: Byron, Dryden, Herbert, Shakespeare, Spenser.
- Globe Edition. Macmillan Co. With introductions and sometimes glossaries. Contains Arnold, E. B. Browning, Robert Browning (two volumes), Burns, Chaucer, Coleridge, Cowper, Dryden, Goldsmith (miscellaneous works), Malory, Milton, Pope, Scott, Shelley, Shakespeare, Spenser, Tennyson, Wordsworth.
- Oxford Poets. Henry Frowde, Clarendon Press. Edited, with introductions and notes. Burns, Byron, Chaucer, Keats, Milton, Scott, Shakespeare, Shelley, Wordsworth.

SERIES OF CLASSICS ADAPTED TO SCHOOL USE.

(Abbreviations, to be used in the references below, are given first.)

- A. P. S. The Athenæum Press Series. Ginn & Co.
 B. L. S. Belles Lettres Series. Heath & Co.
 C. P. S. Clarendon Press Series. The Clarendon Press, Oxford.
 Eng. R. English Readings. Holt & Co.
 Eng. C. English Classics. Macmillan.
 Lake E. C. Lake English Classics. Scott, Foresman & Co.
 Temple C. Temple Classics. Macmillan (Dent).
 Cassell. Cassell's National Library. Texts modernized.
 R. L. S. Riverside Literature Series. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
 G. S. Gateway Series. American Book Co.
 Long. Longman's English Classics.

2. QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY.

CHAPTER I.

Old English Poetry. Thomas Arnold's edition of Beowulf (Longman's) contains the text, translation, and notes. A later text is A. J. Wyatt's (1894). An excellent prose translation is that by C. B. Tinker (Newson & Co., N. Y.). There are rhythmical translations by James M. Garnett (Ginn & Co.) and by John Lesslie Hall (paper, D. C. Heath & Co.), and an edited translation by C. G. Child in R. L. S. Parts are also to be found translated in Stopford Brooke's *Early English Literature* and Morley's *English Writers*, Vol. I. Ex-

tracts from the original may be found in March's or Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Reader.

An outline of the story of Beowulf should be read and then several of the best passages, for example, the coming of the heroes, 194-380; the swimming-match with Breca, 530-580; the fight with Grendel, 710-836; Grendel's mere, 1357-1379; the fight with Grendel's mother, 1492-1590; Beowulf's funeral-pyre, 3100-3184. Read also the translation of the Fight at Finnsburg, Brooke's *Early English Literature*, 64-65 (also included in Hall's translation of Beowulf) *The Wanderer, The Seafarer, Riddles, Charms, etc.*, may be found both in Brooke and in Morley (Vol. II.). Read the *Dream of the Rood*, Brooke, 440-442.

Can you find evidence in this early poetry of a love of the gentler aspects of nature? How far could you localize the scene of Beowulf from internal evidence? Of what occupations do you get hints? What virtues are honored? Find Christian interpolations. Is war indulged in for the love of it? Does familiarity with fighting diminish respect for order, justice, charity, or humanity? Find passages that might be modern. Can you trace any parallels between *The Seafarer* and Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*? Cite some modern examples of English sea-poetry.

Define alliteration carefully. In modern English versification what principles have been added to those which governed Anglo-Saxon verse? What principles have been modified or discarded? What influences have helped to work the change? What Anglo-Saxon verse characteristics appear in Longfellow's *Hiawatha*?

Collateral Reading: Tennyson's translation of *The Battle of Brunanburh*; *The Exile's Complaint, The Ruined Wall-Stone, etc.*, in Longfellow's *Poets and Poetry of Europe*; *The Grave*, in Morley, Vol. II., p. 333; Tennyson's drama, *Harold*; also William Morris's prose romances.

CHAPTER II.

Old English Prose. Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, Alfred's *Boëthius* and *Orosius*, and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* may be found translated in Bohn's *Antiquarian Library*.

Read Cuthbert's account of the death of Bede in Morley's *Library of English Literature*, or in Brooke's *Early English Literature*, pp. 339-340; also the conclusion of the *Ecclesiastical History*, *Encyc. Brit.*, article Bede. Chapter xxiv. of the *History* contains the story of Cædmon. Read Alfred's account of the decay of learning in the preface to his *Pastoral Care*, Brooke's *English Literature* to

the Norman Conquest, p. 64. Read his Boëthius, Preface, and Chapter xxii. (Bohn, p. 257). In the Chronicle, read the entries for the years 871, 878, 958, and 1087

CHAPTERS III. and IV.

Legends of Britain For further accounts of Geoffrey of Monmouth, Walter Map, and Layamon, consult Saintsbury, Morley, etc. The third volume of Morley's English Writers contains an outline of the Brut (and also of Havelok the Dane).

What legendary British kings give the titles to two of Shakespeare's dramas? Find a passage in Milton's Comus referring to the old British kings. What familiar American poem is based on the quest for the Holy Grail? (All these works afford collateral reading.)

Collateral reading for the twelfth century: Tennyson's Becket; Scott's Ivanhoe.

CHAPTER V.

Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight, edited by Professor Skeat for the Early English Text Society. The Pearl, edited by Morris for the same (Early English Alliterative Poems); also by I. Gollancz, 1891. Editions of both are promised in B. L. S.

Mandeville. The standard edition of the English translation is the Voiage and Travaile of Sir John Maundeville, edited by J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps. A good reprint of this, with modernized spelling, is in Macmillan's Library of English Classics. The text in Bohn's Library and in Cassell is very freely modernized and loses something of the original flavor. Read the chapters about the royal estate of Prester John (xxvii. to end), or read the selections in Craik, Vol. I. How many strange words and phrases do you find? In what respects does the style seem crude? Does the author write as if he believed his stories?

Wyclif, Langland, Gower. Morris and Skeat's Specimens of Early English, Part II., gives selections from all three in the original form. Selections from Wyclif with modernized spelling may be found in Craik, I., and from Langland and Gower in Ward, I. The entire Confessio Amantis is in Chalmers and in Morley's Carisbrooke Library. Selections from Wyclif's Bible may be found in Old South Leaflets (No. 57) and in Maynard, Merrill & Co.'s English Classics. Some portion of this translation should be carefully compared with the King James version. Note especially such plurals as *workis*, such verb-forms as *hungren*, and such words as *agenrisyng* (resurrection).

Chaucer. Complete Works, ed. by W. W. Skeat, 6 vols. The Student's Chaucer, complete, with life and glossary, by the same, 1 vol. The Canterbury Tales, ed. by A. W. Pollard, 2 vols. Same, annotated and accented, by John Saunders, 1 vol. The Prologue, Knightes Tale, and Nonne Preestes Tale, by Morris and Skeat (Clarendon Press). Selections, with notes and glossary, by H. Corson. Primer of Chaucer, by Pollard. Studies in Chaucer, T. R. Lounsbury, 3 vols. Essay, by Lowell. In the Days of Chaucer, by Tudor Jenks.

For reading in Chaucer, some school text, like the Clarendon Press volume, or Corson's Selections, is essential. The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales should be read in part or entire; then the Knightes Tale of Palamon and Arcite, the first and perhaps the best of the twenty-four. Other suitable tales are the Nonne Preestes Tale (modernized by Dryden as *The Cock and the Fox*), ll. 1-61, 367-626; the Man of Lawes Tale; and the Clerkes Tale. Saunders's Canterbury Tales, with its descriptions and pictures of the pilgrims, will afford most helpful collateral reading.

Practice carefully the pronunciation and scansion of a few lines of the Tales. Find in the Prologue touches of the poet's humor, irony, or tenderness. What do you learn of his attitude toward chivalry? Toward the Church? Toward women? Toward tradesmen? Is the tone of the Knightes Tale classical, or mediæval? What moral or morals does it teach? What other English writers have used the same story?

CHAPTER VI.

Hoccleve, Lydgate. Works partially edited by the Early English Text Society. Extracts from both in Ward, I., in Arber, I., and in Morris and Skeat's Specimens.

Ballads. Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry, first published in 1765, founded on a Folio MS. written about 1650. Scott's Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, 3 vols., 1802-3. Child's English and Scottish Popular Ballads, 5 vols., 10 parts, 1882-98; Cambridge ed., 1 vol., 1904. Allingham's Ballad Book. Gummere's Old English Ballads, in A. P. S. Ward, I.; Arber, I. (contains *The Nut-Brown Maid*).

What varieties of stanza form do you find in old ballads? What is the ordinary line length? Can you make the verse more regular in metre and rhyme by applying the Chaucerian rules for pronunciation? Do you find words and phrases that you recognize as Scotch? What is a refrain? Do ballad refrains always have a meaning?

What purpose do they serve? Does the minstrel ever speak in his own person? Is the narrative often varied by description, or by conversation? Do you know any modern ballads? Does the word ballad, as applied to them, have a different meaning? If they are imitations, how far do they conform to the old popular ballad?

On *Miracle Plays* and *Moralities*, see Ward's *English Dramatic Literature*, Vol. I.; Manly's *Specimens of the Pre-Shakspearean Drama*, Vol. I. Pollard's *English Miracle Plays* contains an excellent Introduction, besides specimens (Noah's Flood, Play of the Shepherds, Everyman, etc.) and notes.

Malory. Fac-simile reprint by O. Sommer, 3 vols. The best edition for reading is that by Sir E. Strachey, with modernized spelling. It contains a valuable Introduction. Books I. and II., ed. by C. G. Child, in R. L. S. *Selections in Eng. C.* Specimens in Craik, I. Sidney Lanier's *The Boy's King Arthur* is an abridgment.

Compare the description of the passing of Arthur (in Craik) with Tennyson's *Morte d'Arthur*, noting close imitations of the original and departures from it. Further comparisons may be made of Tennyson's Gareth and Lynette, ll. 430 onward, with *Malory*, VII.; Balin and Balan with *Malory*, II.; Lancelot and Elaine with *Malory*, XVIII, vii-xxi.; etc.

Dunbar. Ward, I; Arber, I.—*Skelton*. Ward, I; Arber, II; Chalmers, II. Examples of both in Skeat's *Specimens*.

CHAPTER VII.

More, Latimer, Ascham, Wyatt, Surrey. The earliest translation of *Utopia* (Robinson's, 1551) is reprinted in Arber and in the *Temple Classics*. A much later translation is in Cassell. For Latimer and Ascham, see Arber's *Reprints* or Cassell. Wyatt and Surrey's *Poems* may be had in the *Riverside Edition*; also, a large portion of them in Arber's *Reprint of Tottel's Miscellany*. See also for these and all writers henceforth the standard books of selections, Craik (prose), Ward (poetry), etc.

CHAPTER VIII.

Spenser. Complete Works, with Life, Critical Essays, Variant Readings, etc., ed. by A. B. Grosart, 10 (9 published) volumes. Analysis of *Faërie Queene*, Bk. I., in Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*, Vol. III., Appendix 2. Essays on Spenser by Lowell, Whipple (*Atl. Monthly*, xxi.), and Dowden (*Transcripts and Studies*). For Italian influence on English poetry, see *Edinburgh Review*, Jan. 1896.

Find Middle English forms in Spenser's poems (see F. Q. I. v. 3, 44, etc.) and otherwise illustrate his use of archaic language. What is the Spenserian stanza? What later poets have used it? What is the meaning of the opening five lines of the *Faërie Queene*? Of the fourth stanza? Do you find allegory interesting? Is it an effective means of teaching morality? What drawbacks are there to the enjoyment of the *Faërie Queene*? What does Macaulay mean by saying "Very few and very weary are those who are in at the death of the Blatant Beast" (which, however, does not die)? Is this a damaging criticism? Compare Despair and his cave (I. ix.) with Bunyan's Giant Despair (see Lowell's essay).

Sidney. Poems, ed. by Dr. Grosart. *Arcadia*, reprinted by Dr. Sommer. Enough of the *Astrophel* and *Stella* sonnets, and of the work of the Sonneteers generally, may be found in Ward. For a fuller collection of the lyric verse of the period see Bullen's *Elizabethan Lyrics*.

CHAPTER IX.

The Early Drama. Manly's *Specimens of the Pre-Shakspearean Drama* contains Interludes (Vol. I.), Roister Doister, Gammer Gurton's Needle, Gorboduc, etc (Vol. II.). The two comedies are also in *Representative English Comedies*, ed. by C. M. Gayley.

Marlowe. Plays in the Mermaid Series. The most important for reading or study is Dr. Faustus, which may be found in the Temple Dramatists, or in Morley's Universal Library. For criticism, see Ward's *History*, Vol. I., Symonds's *Shakspeare's Predecessors*, Lowell's *Old English Dramatists*, Dowden's *Transcripts and Studies*.

Shakspeare. Furness's *Variorum Shakspeare* (twelve plays) is the best edition for exhaustive study of the plays included in it. Clark and Wright's *Cambridge Shakspeare*, 9 vols., is most useful for comprehensive textual and critical study; it contains the authoritative text. A good reading edition is the Temple *Shakspeare*. Good school texts are those of Rolfe, Hudson, Wright, the Arden, The Neilson *Shakspeare* in Lake Eng. C, and the Temple School *Shakspeare*. Abbott's *Shakspearian Grammar*. Schmidt's *Shakspeare Lexicon*, Bartlett's *Concordance*.

Sidney Lee's *Life*; Dowden's *Shakspeare Primer*, Introduction to *Shakspeare*, and *Shakspeare, His Mind and Art*; Hudson's *Life, Art, and Characters*; Moulton's *Shakspeare as a Dramatic Artist*; Coleridge's *Lectures*; Lowell's essay in *My Study Windows*. In the *Days of Shakspeare*, by Tudor Jenks.

Define and illustrate the terms *comedy*, *romantic comedy*, *tragedy*, *chronicle play*. What are some of the sources of Shakespeare's plays? How wide a range of history and life do they cover? What occupations in life have representation among the characters? Select one (that of physician, astrologer, hostler, cobbler), and study Shakespeare's knowledge of the occupation and his conception of the characters that pursue it. Is the utterance of folly the especial office of the fool? What female characters are celebrated, and for what charms or virtues? Into what plays does an element of the supernatural enter? Gather and examine a few words used in an archaic or obsolete sense (*e. g.*, *owe*, *use*, *purchase*, *admire*, *require*, *engine*, *relish*, *speculation*, *brave*, *weird*, *timely*). What variations are there from the blank verse in which the bulk of the dramas is composed? Are such variations to be found in classical Greek and French plays? What are some of the metrical tests which help to determine whether a play was written early or late? Find (with the help of a Concordance) what Shakespeare says of May-Day; of the primrose, rosemary, violet; of the cuckoo, lark, swallow, owl, night-ingale. Consider his figurativeness by noting to how many things and how aptly he applies the figure of a book, a cloud, etc., or by noting under what figures he speaks of life, love, death, etc. Collect his sayings about sleep, dreams, madness, hope, charity.

(These are but a few very general questions and suggestions. The really vital points in the study of Shakespeare,—the development of character, etc.,—can be pursued only in connection with special plays, and must be left to the text-books of the various plays.)

Jonson. The old standard edition of his works was Gifford's. A new edition in nine volumes has been edited by Herford and Simpson for the Clarendon Press. The *Alchemist*, ed. by Schelling, in B. L. S. Volpone, The *Alchemist*, The *Silent Woman*, The *Sad Shepherd*, and a few poems, in Morley's Univ. Libr.; *Masques and Entertainments* in Morley's Carisbrooke Libr. Symonds's *Ben Jonson*. Critical chapters on Jonson in Ward's *English Dramatic Literature* and Symonds's *Shakespeare's Predecessors*. A *Study of Ben Jonson*, by Swinburne. Read Herrick's *An Ode for Ben Jonson*, in *Hesperides*.

Consult a dictionary for the derivation of "humour," and further exemplify the dramatic humour from Jonson's plays.

Beaumont and Fletcher. Ed. by Darley, 2 vols.; by Dyce, 11 vols. Plays in preparation in B. L. S.—*Webster*. Ed. by Dyce, 1 vol. The *White Devil* and *Duchess of Malfi* in B. L. S. Selections from both in the *Mermaid Series*.

CHAPTER X.

Lyly. Euphues in Arber's English Reprints. Symonds's Shakespeare's Predecessors, cap. xiii.

Hooker. Ecclesiastical Polity, Book I., in C. P. S.

Bacon. Advancement of Learning in Cassell. Harmony of the Essays, Arber's Reprints. Essays, ed. by A. S. West, Pitt Press Series; also in Temple, Cassell, etc.

Analyze one of the essays (*e. g.*, Of Studies, Of Envy, Of Great Place) and see whether it can be readily outlined. Examine the vocabulary for archaic or unusual words. Do you find points of similarity between Bacon's English and that of the Bible? What comparisons does he make, and what figures of speech does he employ? What do you learn about his own reading? Find an essay that does not deal with abstract ideas.

CHAPTER XI.

Herrick. Editions in The Muses' Library and Alpine Poets. A nearly complete edition in Morley's Univ. Libr. Arranged selections by Palgrave in the Golden Treasury Series.

For the Caroline Poets generally, see Ward's English Poets, Vol. II. Lovelace's To Althea from Prison and Cowley's The Chronicle may be read. Dr. Johnson's essay on Cowley, the first in his Lives of the Poets, is more read than Cowley's works. On the epoch of "conceits" see Arnold's Manual of English Literature, 160-164; Morley's First Sketch of English Literature, 526-532; Taine, I. 201-206.

Taylor's Holy Living and Holy Dying, *Browne's* Religio Medici, and *Walton's* Complete Angler are all in Cassell. Browne's Urn-Burial is included with the Religio Medici in Temple C. Read in Walton the otter-hunt, chapter ii., the milkmaid passage, chapter iv., the gipsy scene, chapter v., and the conclusion. Note the writer's laxity in grammar and syntax, and the ingenuous prolixity of his style. In Charles Lamb's works may be found a collection of Fuller's best sayings.

Milton. Poetical Works, ed. by Professor Masson, 3 vols.; Prose Works in Bohn, 5 vols. Selections from poems in Lake E. C., Holt's Eng. R., etc. Areopagitica and Letter on Education in Cassell. Life by Masson, in 6 vols. Life and Works, by W. P. Trent. For early essays on Milton, see Addison's Spectator Papers, Johnson's Lives of the Poets, and Macaulay's essays; for later, see Emerson's, Lowell's, and Arnold's essays; Dowden's Transcripts and Studies; Raleigh's Milton. Introduction to Milton, by H. Corson.

Whence does the *Areopagitica* derive its title? What events in history were the occasion of its writing? Find and read in it the famous passage about "that immortal garland," and "our sage and serious poet, Spenser;" also the passage beginning, "Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation." Note the connection of the latter, and mark in the passage the characteristics of Milton's prose style as opposed, say, to Bacon's, or to Walton's, or as compared with Burke's.

From what source does Milton get the images used in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*? Why has he used Italian titles? Is there any moral in the poems? Can you trace anything in *Comus* or *Lycidas* to Puritan opinions and ideals? Do you find anything foreign to those ideals as you have conceived them? What do you think of Dr. Johnson's opinion of *Lycidas*, that "the diction is harsh, the rhymes uncertain, and the numbers displeasing?"

Passages of exceptional interest or power in *Paradise Lost* are the description of the Council of the fallen angels in the first book, the journey through Chaos in the second, the invocation to Light in the third, the description of Paradise in the fourth, the celebration of Creation in the seventh, the Temptation in the ninth, and the Expulsion in the last. Read aloud. Study to discover just what is meant by the inversion and involution of Milton's style. Find a passage that seems to be a mere riot of names. Find descriptions of morning and evening. Cite from the poem evidences of Milton's knowledge of mathematics and astronomy; of his fondness for music. Find a passage that is sublime in sheer imaginative sweep; one that is sublime from moral loftiness.

Collateral reading: Macaulay's *Conversation between Mr. Abraham Cowley and Mr. John Milton, touching the great Civil War*; Landor's *Imaginary Conversations* (Southey and Landor); Wordsworth's *Sonnet on Milton*; Longfellow's *Sonnet on Milton*.

CHAPTER XII.

Pepys. *Pepys's Diary* is published in Cassell. It will be interesting to compare the description of the great fire of 1666, in volume vi., with that in Evelyn's *Diary* (Cassell, New Series, vol. xi.).

Bunyan. Works edited by Offor, 3 vols. *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Grace Abounding* in C. P. S. *Pilgrim's Progress* in R. L. S., in *Golden Treasury Series*, etc. *Grace Abounding* in Cassell. Essay by Macaulay. Sketch in Green's *History of the English People*.

Find evidence in *The Pilgrim's Progress* that Bunyan was familiar with a soldier's life. Trace some of the inconsistencies in the allegory

which are pointed out by Macaulay. Where does Bunyan get his style? Is it simpler than Walton's? Does Walton's seem consciously literary by the side of it? Find examples of homely English idioms; of vivid and spontaneous figures. Why should mountains be portrayed "vaguely and conventionally" in Bunyan's work? Trace in detail the allegorical significance of one or two episodes.

Dryden. Works, Scott's edition, re-edited by Saintsbury, 18 vols. Select Poems, C. P. S. Selected essays, C. P. S. Essays on the Drama, Eng. R. Discourses on Satire and on Epic Poetry in Cassell. Essays by Hazlitt, Macaulay, Lowell (Among my Books), Collins, and Masson. See also Dr. Johnson's Lives of the Poets.

One of the best ways of getting at the specific characteristics of Dryden's verse is to compare a portion of his Palamon and Arcite (Lake E. C.) with Chaucer's Knightes Tale. The peculiar force, however, of his neat, epigrammatic couplet is better seen in the satires. Discover any couplets that have become familiar in quotation (See Absalom and Achitophel, Prologue to The Tempest, and Lines Under Mr. Milton's Picture). In what senses was the word "wit" used in Dryden's day? Illustrate from his poetry or prose. Does Dryden's prose (as seen in the later Discourses, On Satire, 1692, and On Epic Poetry, 1697) seem to you to differ from Milton's prose more or less than Macaulay's differs from Dryden's? How much time intervenes between their respective dates? In what respects is Dryden more modern than Milton? Is he more modern than Bunyan? Is he as imaginative as either? Is Wordsworth's stricture about his lack of images from nature just?

CHAPTER XIII.

Swift. Works, ed. by T. Scott. Also in Bohn's Library. Selections in C. P. S.; Carisbrooke Library; Camelot Classics; Eng. R. Gulliver's Travels in Macmillan's Pocket Classics. Life, by J. C. Collins. See also Dr. Johnson's Lives. Essays by Thackeray (English Humorists) and A. Dobson (Eighteenth Century Vignettes).

Define satire. Distinguish between irony and sarcasm. May Swift be said to employ both in his satire? Find an example in his work of good-natured humor. Show the satirical purpose of some incident in Gulliver's Travels. Who were the Big-endians? Does the style of the book seem sufficiently like that of Robinson Crusoe to place them near the same date?

Steele and Addison. Essays in British Essayists. Addison's Works, ed. by Tickell; selected poems in Ward. The Spectator, ed. by Henry Morley. Selections from the Spectator in A. P. S., C. P.

S., *Golden Treasury*, R. L. S., and other series. The *Sir Roger de Coverley Papers*, ed. by Abbott in *Lake E. C.* (excellent introduction on the life of the times). *Life of Steele*, by Aitken. See also Johnson's *Lives*, Macaulay's *Essays* and Thackeray's *English Humorists*.

For an exact reprint of a *Spectator* essay, see C. P. S. selections from Addison, paper No. 35. The same and succeeding papers (58-62) may be studied for Addison's idea of "wit." Papers commended by Macaulay as showing Addison's varied excellence are Nos. 26, 329, 69, 317, 159, 343, 517. Note the relative proportion of "observations" and "reflections" in several essays, and consider whether the *Spectator* could be better named. Give examples of the tendency to generalize. Examine the *Spectator's* attitude toward the theatre; the church; fashionable life. Is there any evidence of a Whig bias? Show, if you can, that Addison's satire is more severe than Steele's. Find evidences in the essays of Addison's scholarship; of Steele's roystering. Make a list of stock phrases affected by the essayists. Find examples of this style in Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*.

Pope. Works, ed. by Elwin and Courthope, with life, 11 vols. *Essay on Man*, etc., in C. P. S. Portions of the translation of the *Iliad*, in *Lake E. C.*, etc. Essays by De Quincey and Thackeray (*English Humorists*). See also Dr. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*.

Examples of Pope's poetry at its best are the speech of Sarpedon to Glaucus, *Iliad*, Bk. XII.; the conclusion of the *Dunciad* (see Johnson's opinion, Boswell's Johnson, year 1769); and the character of Atticus in the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*. Read *Essay on Criticism*, ll. 52-91, for Pope's idea of what it is to "follow Nature." Find examples of his conventional treatment of outdoor nature. Compare his *Temple of Fame* with the second and especially the third book of Chaucer's *House of Fame*, of which it is partly an imitation. Which seems to you the more poetic? Recall, or find some of Pope's famous lines and couplets (on fools, vice, order, charms and merit, an honest man, the use of words, a little learning, etc.).

On the period, consult Ashton's *Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne*, Lecky's *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*; Stephen's *History of Thought in the Eighteenth Century*. Collateral reading, Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*, which is written in an imitation of eighteenth century style.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Novel. Dunlap's *History of Prose Fiction* (Bohn). Jusserand's *English Novel in the time of Shakespeare*. Raleigh's *The*

English Novel (to Waverley). Cross's Development of the English Novel. Stoddard's Evolution of the English Novel (for distinctions between the Romance, the Historical Novel, the Novel of Purpose, and the Novel of Problem). Simonds's Introduction to the Study of English Fiction (with selections from Sidney, Lodge, Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, Sterne).

Name some early English metrical tales. Would any of them, turned into prose, yield a novel, as distinguished from a romance? In what respects is a novel like a drama? In what does it differ?

Defoe. Edition of the Novels, by Aitkin, 12 vols. Also an edition in Bohn. Journal of the Plague Year in Morley's Univ. Libr. and Temple C. Robinson Crusoe in many editions (a good reprint of Stothard's 1820 edition is issued by Longmans). Essay by Leslie Stephen (Hours in a Library).

The Novelists. Richardson's works are published by Sotheran; small type editions by Routledge and by Holt. Fielding's and Smollett's works are in Bohn's Library. The best edition of Fielding is edited by Saintsbury; Voyage to Lisbon in Cassell. Smollett's works are edited by Henley, 12 vols. Sterne's works are edited by Saintsbury; a good edition also in Macmillan's Library of English Classics, 2 vols.; also in Temple C.; Tristram Shandy in Morley's Univ. Libr. Mackenzie's Man of Feeling, Walpole's Castle of Otranto, and Beckford's Vathek, in Cassell. Essays on Richardson and Fielding by L. Stephen and A. Dobson; on Fielding by Lowell (Democracy, etc.); On Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne, by Thackeray (English Humorists).

Select a passage from Robinson Crusoe exhibiting minute realism. Can you find any that does not? Cite an instance of Crusoe's piety; of his inventive ingenuity. Why is it impossible that this tale should afford the best kind of character study? What celebrated character of Fielding's recalls one of Addison's? Have you ever come across references to any of these characters in your general reading? What would be some of the difficulties of writing a novel wholly in the letter form? What late writers have imitated the early rogue or adventure stories? To what class of fiction has the relation of practical jokes now been relegated? Do you know of any novel, properly so called, in which romantic love is not an element?

CHAPTER XV.

Johnson. Selected Essays in Camelot Series. Rasselas in C. P. S., Morley's Univ. Libr., Eng. R., Cassell, etc. Lives of the Poets, pub. by Methuen; also in Cassell. Poems in Ward, etc.

The great *Life* is of course Boswell's; ed. by G. Birkbeck Hill, Henry Morley, or M. Morris (Macmillan's Engl. Classics); also in Temple C. An abridged one-volume ed. is published by Holt & Co. *Essays* by Macaulay and Stephen.

In what respects does *Rasselas* fail of realism? Does the escape of the Prince from the Happy Valley have the interest of either plot or adventure? Why? What is its general teaching in regard to the search for human happiness? Are any of Johnson's own experiences reflected in the book? Find in Boswell's *Life* of Johnson opinions similar to those expressed in *Rasselas*. Find, in the same, anecdotes illustrating Johnson's peculiarities of character—his seeming harshness, his kindness, his prejudices, his justice, his reasonableness, his critical discernment, etc.

Goldsmith. Misc. Works, ed. by Masson, Globe edition. Vicar of Wakefield, Poems, and Plays, in Morley's Univ. Libr.; the first also in various school editions (Lake E. C., Longmans, etc.). Plays in Cassell; *She Stoops to Conquer* in Macmillan's Pocket Classics. *Essays* by Macaulay, Thackeray (Engl. Humorists), Dobson.

How does Goldsmith's view of happiness as set forth in the conclusion of *The Traveller* differ from Johnson's in *Rasselas*? Is Goldsmith's doctrine too sweeping? Is the reasoning of *The Deserted Village*, that increase of wealth and luxury means decrease of national strength, sound political economy? Find some often quoted couplets. How does the Vicar of Wakefield set forth the same ideals as the poems?

Sheridan. *The Rivals* and *School for Scandal* in Cassell; in Morley's Univ. Libr.

Burke. Select works, ed. by E. J. Payne, 3 volumes. Selections in Eng. R. and Cassell. *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful* in Cassell and Temple C. *Speech on Conciliation*, ed. by Denney, Lake E. C. *Essay* by Birrell (*Obiter Dicta*). See also Macaulay's *Warren Hastings*, Thackeray's *Four Georges*.

Verify, by examination of some pages of Burke, J. R. Green's description of his oratory—"its passionate ardor, its poetic fancy, its amazing prodigality of resources; the dazzling succession in which irony, pathos, invective, tenderness, the most brilliant word-pictures, the coolest argument followed each other." Note Burke's frequent and happy quotations. Find a saying of his own that is often quoted.

Thomson, Collins, Gray. The works of the first two are in the Aldine Edition. Gray has been edited by Gosse, 4 vols. Excellent edition of each (Collins complete) in A. P. S.; Gray and Collins in

Chandos Classics. For selections, see Ward. Essay on Collins by Swinburne (Miscellanies). Essay on Gray by Arnold, Lowell, Dobson, and Stephen.

Compare the opening stanzas of the *Castle of Indolence* with the description of the House of Morpheus, Spenser's *Faërie Queene*, I. i. 39-41. Also with Tennyson's *Lotos-Eaters*. Would Collins's Ode to Evening be better or more popular if it were rhymed? Do you find any reminiscences of Milton in it? Do you find such in Gray's *Elegy*? Apart from rhyme, is the latter poem more musical? More conventional? More realistic? More imaginative? More melancholy? Is nature described for its own sake, or used rather as a background for moralization?

Cowper. Works, ed. by Southey, 15 vols., 1836-37. Selections, including *The Task*, ed. by J. O. Murray, in A. P. S. Selections also in Cassell. Life by Thomas Wright. Essays by Leslie Stephen, W. Bagehot, A. Dobson.

With what familiar line does one of the books of *The Task* open? Find a couplet in *The Task* that sounds like Pope. Find a passage that is very different in manner, and explain the difference. Read Mrs. Browning's poem, *Cowper's Grave*.

Chatterton, Crabbe, Blake. Poetical works in Aldine edition, and in *Canterbury Poets*. Selections in Ward's *English Poets*. Selections from Crabbe in Cassell; *The Borough*, in Temple C.

Burns. Centenary edition of poetry, 4 vols. Selections in A. P. S. and B. L. S. Essays by Carlyle and Stevenson; by W. Hazlitt, on Burns and the old English Ballads (*Lectures on the English Poets*); by Hawthorne, on the Haunts of Burns (*Our Old Home*). Poems on Burns by Wordsworth, and Longfellow.

Name several songs by Burns written in pure English. In what is the *Cotter's Saturday Night* written? In what stanza form? What are several of Burns's favorite stanza forms? Make sure you understand the construction and meaning of the last stanza of *To a Louse*. What American poet is like Burns in simplicity and lyric ease? What Irish singer of melodies has some points of similarity? Why does this universally familiar popular poetry not rank as the greatest literature? What kind of life does Burns chiefly celebrate? Would you call him democratic? Do you suppose he sympathized with the Revolution in France?

CHAPTER XVI.

Wordsworth. Works, ed. by Knight, in 8 volumes; *Life*, 3 vols. The best of his poems have been selected by Matthew Arnold for the

Golden Treasury Series. Selections also in A. P. S., B. L. S., and Cassell. Prefaces and Essays, ed. by A. J. George. Essays by Lowell (Among my Books); by Pater (Appreciations); by Stephen (Hours in a Library).

Test some of Wordsworth's poems of nature for their descriptive truth and value. Does the poet stop with the description or go on to reflection? Find instances of his sense of close communion with nature and of nature's consciousness (The Leech-Gatherer, etc.). Find examples of simple diction; of calling things by their homely names. Can you find examples of stock poetic names also? Does Michael seem to you too simple for good poetry? What do you make of We are Seven? Do the poems on Lucy satisfy Wordsworth's description of poetry as having its origin in "emotion remembered in tranquillity"? Compare his poems To the Daisy (especially "In youth from rock to rock I went") with Burns's To a Mountain Daisy. Read the poem At the Grave of Burns. What two poets probably influenced Wordsworth most? In what poems do you find the evidence of this influence?

Coleridge. Works, ed. by Shedd, 7 vols. Poems and Dramatic Works, ed. by Knight, 1 vol. Poetical Works, ed. by J. D. Campbell, 1 vol.; also in Aldine edition, Canterbury Poets, A. P. S., and B. L. S. Prose Works in Bohn; Selections in Engl. R. Essays by Lowell, Dowden, Garnett, Pater, and Swinburne.

What can you learn of the sources of the Ancient Mariner? What are its supernatural elements? Has it human interest? What is the moral? What archaisms were used in the 1798 edition that were afterwards changed? Were any allowed to remain? Did Coleridge write any other ballads? Does he draw any romantic elements from mediævalism? Does he give any realistic descriptions of natural scenery? Has he written any poems upon nature alone? Is his diction as simple as Wordsworth's? Can you detect the influence of Christabel in Arnold's Tristram and Iseult? What poem of Lowell's shows the influence of it?

Southey. Poetical Works, pub. by Crowell. Selections in Canterbury Poets and in Golden Treasury Series. Life of Nelson in Temple C. and in Cassell.—*Campbell.* Poetical Works, Aldine Edition.—*Moore.* Poetical Works, in Canterbury Poets.

Byron. Poetry, ed. by E. H. Coleridge, 7 vols.; Letters and Journals, ed. by R. E. Prothero, 6 vols. Selections, by F. T. Carpenter, in Engl. R. Childe Harold in C. P. S. Essays by Arnold, Macaulay, J. Morley, Swinburne, Henley, Paul E. More (*Atlantic Monthly*,

December, 1890). Jeaffreson's *The Real Lord Byron* is interesting but not critical.

Illustrate Byron's carelessness of style; his facility in rhyming; his humor; his pathos; his cynicism. Examine the variety of his metres. Do his Spenserian stanzas sound like Spenser's? Just what is his debt to Scott? What poems are founded on British scenes or events? How wide is the geography, so to speak, of his poetry? What aspects of nature does he delight in? How does the realism of his sea poetry compare with the *Ancient Mariner*? What does Ruskin mean by praising his "living truth," and Arnold by praising his "sincerity and strength"? Does he give way to sentiment, or does he seem to check sentimentality by deliberate mockery? Illustrate his egotism and his cynicism? What special directions does his "romanticism" take? What passages of his poems would you select for committing to memory?

Shelley. Works, ed. by H. B. Forman, 8 vols. Works ed. by Woodberry, 4 vols. Selections in Golden Treasury Series. Essays and Letters in Camelot Series. Life, by Edward Dowden, 2 vols. Essays by Dowden, Shairp, Swinburne, Arnold, Stephen, and Woodberry.

Shelley's *Adonais* may be studied (and compared with *Lycidas*); perhaps also his *Sensitive Plant*, or his *Ode to Naples*. But analysis is of little value, and the time may be better spent in committing to memory several stanzas of *The Skylark* or *The West Wind*. Those who are familiar with succeeding lyric poets—Poe, Tennyson, Arnold, Swinburne,—will be interested to note Shelley's influence upon them, which may be readily traced from *Alastor* and a dozen other poems.

Keats. Works, ed. by H. B. Forman, 4 vols. Golden Treasury Series, 1 vol. Essays by Lowell, Arnold, Swinburne, Masson, W. H. Hudson.

Why is the name "Cockney School" sometimes applied to Keats, Hunt, and their friends? What is there in Keats akin to Spenser? to the Elizabethans generally? Does he draw upon the life about him for subjects? Is his love of nature as deep as Wordsworth's? Does it seem to be genuine? Are his classic themes handled classically? Point out the "fine excess" in *Endymion*. Can you find any fault with the *Eve* of *St. Agnes*? Is there any important poetic form (line or stanza) which Keats did not employ? Give instances of his "run-on couplets"; of his license in rhyme. Why is *Hyperion* Miltonic? Does Keats have any moral to teach?

Jane Austen. Works, ed. by R. B. Johnson. Selections in Craik. Life, by Goldwin Smith. Essay by H. H. Bonnell ("Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, Jane Austen").

Scott. *Lady of the Lake*, *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and *Marmion* in *Lake E. C.*, etc. Novels in many editions; *Ivanhoe* in *Lake E. C.* Life, by J. G. Lockhart, 7 vols.; by Saintsbury. Essays by Carlyle, Swinburne, L. Stephen, Saintsbury.

Study Scott's treatment of nature in Canto III. of the *Lady of the Lake*, and consult Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, III. xvi. 23-45. Does the element of mystery enter into Scott's romanticism? Are his battle scenes realistic, or conventional? How do his novels compare with Cooper's in the proportion of description to narration and conversation? Upon what "properties" does he depend for mediæval color? Does he make his heroes superhumanly brave or strong or noble? Who are Rowena, Meg Merrilies, Dominie Sampson, Gurth, Redgauntlet, Jeanie Deans? How much of *Ivanhoe* is historical? Name some of Scott's historical characters? Make a report upon the different periods and events of history covered by his historical novels. What novel of the sea did he write?

CHAPTER XVII.

Lamb. Works of Charles and Mary Lamb, ed. by E. V. Lucas, 7 vols. Works of Charles Lamb, ed. by Wm. Macdonald, 12 vols. Essays of Elia, ed. by A. Birrell. Selections in Bell's English Classics; in Doubleday & McClure's Little Masterpieces; in R. L. S., etc. Life, by E. V. Lucas, 2 vols. Essays by De Quincey, Pater, Woodberry.

De Quincey's Account of Lamb should be read. Among Lamb's essays to be commended for reading are *New Year's Eve*, *Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist*, *The Old and New Schoolmaster*, *Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading*, *A Dissertation upon Roast Pig*, *The Superannuated Man*, *Dream Children*. Note how the style in the last named differs from that of the others, and how perfectly it is fitted to its theme. What in general can you say of Lamb's method? What is the purpose of the essays? How did they get their collective name? Find a touch of humor in the *Dream Children*; of satire in the *Roast Pig*; a pun in *The Convalescent*. Give illustrations of his metaphors, archaisms, pedantic phrases. Do you know of any later writer who possesses similar quaintness or charm?

De Quincey. *Collected Works*, ed. by Masson, 14 vols. *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, *Camelot Classics*; *Temple C.*

Reprint of first edition ed. by Garnett, also by H. Morley. *Joan of Arc* and *English Mail Coach*, in Engl. R. *Flight of a Tartar Tribe in Lake E. C.* Selections in A. P. S. *Murder as a Fine Art*, English Mail Coach, in Cassell. *Life* by H. A. Page (A. H. Japp.) *Essays* by Birrell, Masson, Stephen, Saintsbury.

For the personal De Quincey, read the *Autobiographic Sketches*; for the scholar and opium-eater, read the *Confessions*. Any analysis of De Quincey must be chiefly rhetorical, and his vocabulary, sentences, and constructions generally, will afford abundant exercises and topics for discussion along lines suggested in the text.

Landor. Works, ed. by Forster, 8 vols.; by Crump, 10 vols. Selections in Golden Treasury Series, A. P. S., Engl. R. *Life* by Forster. *Essays* by Lowell, Dowden, de Vere, Swinburne, Stephen, Scudder.

Conversations commended for reading are *Æsop* and *Rhodope*, *Marcellus* and *Hannibal*, *Tiberius* and *Vipsania*, *Peter the Great* and *Alexis*, *The Lady Lisle* and *Elizabeth Gaunt*, *Leofric* and *Godiva*. Upon topics of English literary interest are *Queen Elizabeth* and *Cecil*, *Essex* and *Spenser*, *Lord Brooke* and *Sir Philip Sidney*, *Steele* and *Addison*.

Macaulay. Works, ed. by Lady Trevelyan, 8 vols. Numerous school editions of selected essays. *Life*, by G. O. Trevelyan. *Essays* by Stephen, J. Morley, Saintsbury.

Among the best of Macaulay's historical essays are those on *Clive*, *Hastings*, and *Pitt*; of the literary essays, the *Britannica* articles on *Bunyan*, *Goldsmith*, and *Johnson*. Of his *History*, the third chapter is well suited to general reading. His mechanical style lends itself easily to analysis. Note the construction of his sentences, his concreteness, his allusiveness, his abundance of illustration, his emphasis and exaggeration (superlatives). Note also his confidence, his satisfaction with the institutions and the material progress of his own day, his sprightliness, his love of external pageantry, his limited appreciation of delicate shades of thought and feeling. Have some one read successively from each of these four prose writers—*Lamb*, *De Quincey*, *Landor*, and *Macaulay*—and see if you can not tell at once who is in each case the author.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Tennyson. Works, Macmillan ed., 1 vol. (containing the posthumous collection, *The Death of Ænone*, etc.); Cambridge ed., 1 vol. (without *The Death of Ænone*, but with notes, and appendix of early and suppressed poems). *Select Poems*, and *The Princess*, in *Lake*

E. C. The Princess, Maud, and In Memoriam in Temple C. The Princess, Enoch Arden, In Memoriam, and various Idylls, in R. L. S.; also Idylls complete. There are excellent commentaries on The Princess by S. E. Dawson, and on In Memoriam by Alfred Gatty, E. R. Chapman, G. F. Genung, A. C. Bradley, and Charles Mansford. On Tennyson's works, see M. Luce's Tennyson Primer, and Handbook, E. C. Tainsh's Study; Stopford Brooke's Tennyson, His Art and Relation to Modern Life; H. Van Dyke's Poetry of Tennyson. Memoir, by Hallam Tennyson, 2 vols.; Life, by Waugh. Essays by Dawson, Hutton, Gates.

Tennyson may be further studied by verifying and illustrating the statements or following out the suggestions in the text. For instance, interpret the autobiography in Merlin and the Gleam; compare the Lotos-Eaters with the opening stanzas of Thomson's Castle of Indolence; study several of his "landscapes"; set forth the lesson of the Palace of Art, and of Ulysses; name some of his best known lyrics that have not been mentioned in the text; see whether you like the homeliness of such a poem as Walking to the Mail; select the best touches in the Northern Cobbler; compare the several characters in The Princess; compare the hero of Locksley Hall with that of Maud; select several of the finer sentiments and more familiar lines from Locksley Hall; discover the symbolism in Arthur's passing, and the three queens; find in In Memoriam figures drawn from science (in § iv., for instance); find the firmest expression of faith, etc., etc.

Browning. Selections, ed. by Dr. Rolfe; by Miss Hersey. Life, by Dowden (Temple Biog.); Life and Letters, by Mrs. Sutherland Orr. A Handbook to the Works of Robert Browning, by Mrs. Orr. Introduction to the Study of Browning, by H. Corson (with selections); by A. Symons. The Browning Cyclopaedia, by E. Berdoo. The Poetry of Robert Browning, by Stopford Brooke. Browning as Poet and Man, by E. L. Cary.

Could you get an idea of the force and originality of Browning's genius from the titles of his poems? What historical range do they reveal? From what environment does he usually choose his scenes and characters? Are there any poems reflecting English scenery, life, or character? Study one of his dramatic monologues, My Last Duchess, for instance, and describe in full the situations and character revealed. Do his Prospice and Epilogue and Tennyson's Crossing the Bar seem respectively characteristic of their authors?

Mrs. Browning. Select Poems, Ginn & Co. Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, 2 vols. Life, by J. H.

Ingram. Essays, by E. W. Gosse, A. C. Benson, G. K. Chesterton.

Interesting poetic "portraits" from Homer to Keats, may be found in *A Vision of Poets*. Among the best of the Sonnets from the Portuguese are Nos. 1, 4, 14, 18, 20, 22, 43. Justify the description of Mrs. Browning as "a poet of humanity, freedom, and enthusiasm" (Stedman).

Fitzgerald. *Variorum* ed. of works, by F. Bentham and E. Gosse, 7 vols. Letters and Literary Remains, ed by W. Aldis Wright, 3 vols. *Rubaiyat* in Golden Treasury Series. Among other things commended for reading are the opening of the translation of Agamemnon, and the whole of *Such Stuff as Dreams are Made Of* (Calderon's *Life is a Dream*).

Arnold. Selected Poems, in Golden Treasury Series. (For his prose, see below.) *Life*, by Saintsbury; by G. W. E. Russell. Essays by Swinburne, Hutton, Woodberry, etc.

For a personal poem of Arnold's, read *Switzerland*; for poems in his lighter manner, *Kaiser Dead* and *Geist's Grave*; for an example of his stammering expression gradually freeing itself as his inspiration grows, *Human Life*; for a lyrical drama of beautiful separate passages, *Tristram and Iseult*; for exalted philosophy, the soliloquy of Empedocles on Etna; for pure classic beauty, the songs of Callicles in the same poem (interesting to compare with David's songs in Browning's *Saul*); for intimate self-revelation, *Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse*.

Clough. Poems, with Memoir by C. E. Norton. Selections, in the Golden Treasury Series; in Ward. Essays by Bagehot, W. H. Hudson, R. H. Hutton.

CHAPTER XIX.

Dickens. Works, Gadshill ed., with preface by A. Lang. *Life*, by J. Forster, 2 vols. Essays, by F. Harrison, W. Bagehot, A. C. Swinburne, Mrs. Meynell (*Atlantic Monthly*, Jan. 1903).

What traits does Dickens have in common with Richardson and Sterne? What with Defoe and Smollett? How does his handling of the elements of adventure and crime differ from that of Defoe and Smollett? Does he go out of England, or out of the present, for his scenes? Does he depict high life or low life best? Childhood or maturity? Are his characters impossible or only unusual? What parts of *David Copperfield* reflect his own life? Which character might represent his father? Describe some of his more familiar characters that have not been mentioned in the text.

Thackeray. Works, Biographical Edition (with Introductions by Mrs. Ritchie), 13 vols. Henry Esmond in Lake E. C.; The English Humorists in Engl R. Life, by Lewis Melville, 2 vols. See also Introductions of the Biographical Edition, written by Mrs. Ritchie, Thackeray's daughter. Essays by F. Harrison and W. C. Brownell.

Why may Thackeray be regarded as a disciple of Fielding? In what respects is he greater than his teacher? Is his fiction in any respect like Scott's? Define a "snob," and learn what you can of Thackeray's attitude toward snobs. Define a "cynic," and account for the charges of cynicism that have been brought against him. Whence comes the name, "Vanity Fair," and what does it signify? Does Thackeray, like Dickens, give his personages names that fit their characters? What marks of eighteenth century prose are to be found in Henry Esmond? Are the historical characters (Steele, etc.) as well drawn as the imaginary ones? Do his stories tend to end happily? What significance has this in its bearing upon the question of realism?

Kingsley. Life, by M. Kaufmann. Essays by F. Harrison and L. Stephen.

Brontë. Works of Charlotte, Emily, and Anne, Haworth ed., Preface by Mrs. Humphry Ward, 7 vols. Life by Mrs. Gaskell; by C. Shorter. Essays by Swinburne, L. Gates, H. H. Bonnell.

Compare the descriptions of boarding school life in Jane Eyre with those in Dickens's Nicholas Nickleby. Does one author seem to write less in love and more in bitterness than the other? Is Rochester a possible character? Is it realism to make descriptions of nature conform to the feelings of the characters? Learn what you can of the mutual relations of Thackeray and Miss Brontë.

George Eliot. Works, Personal ed. (Doubleday & Page.) Silas Marner in Lake E. C., etc. Life, by J. W. Cross, 3 vols. Essays, by G. W. Cooke, R. H. Hutton, E. Dowden, F. Harrison, L. Stephen, W. C. Brownell, H. H. Bonnell.

How does the midland scenery of her novels differ from that of Miss Brontë's? What other evidences of her early environment do her novels show? If it be a test of a real character as opposed to a type that you cannot tell what he or she will do next, how does Maggie Tulliver compare, for instance, with Tito Melema? Do the novels leave a pleasant final impression? Could it be said that they teach something like repression of the individual as opposed to Miss Brontë's assertion of the individual?

CHAPTER XX.

Carlyle. Works, Ashburton ed., 17 vols.; People's ed., 37 vols.; Centenary ed., 30 vols. Sartor Resartus, and Heroes and Hero-Worship, each in A. P. S.; the same, also French Revolution (3 vols.), and Past and Present in Temple C. Essay on Burns in Lake E. C. Life, by Froude. See also Letters and Reminiscences. Essays by Lowell, Harrison, Brownell.

Carlyle's style cannot be studied with any profit as a model, but it is interesting as revealing the rugged character of the man. Find rhythmical and imaginative passages. Do you think Carlyle could have written poetry? What is his estimate of Burns? Could you possibly charge him with Scotch prejudice? What is his estimate of Johnson? What does the word "hero" mean with him? Who are some of his representative heroes? What would you suppose to be his attitude toward slavery? How far is his historical method like Macaulay's? With what foreign race would he most easily affiliate?

Ruskin. Standard edition of works—the Brantwood—ed. by Norton. Sesame and Lilies (in Engl. R., etc.) is the best short work for reading. See also Vida Scudder's Introduction to the Writings, with selections; and selections in Little Masterpieces series. Life by W. G. Collingwood. See also the autobiography, *Præterita*, and the Letters of Ruskin (Norton). Essays by Harrison, Saintsbury, Brownell, etc.

Read the third lecture of the same series (The Mystery of Life and the Arts, added 1869) and formulate as precisely as possible Ruskin's ethical beliefs. Examine any passage of his work in detail and determine the various rhetorical elements that contribute to its beauty. Is it clear? Is it overwrought? Is it better characterized as beautiful or as sublime? Famous "purple patches" are the description of Turner's Slave Ship, Modern Painters, Part II., Vol. II., Section V., chap. iii., 39; The Mountain Gloom and The Mountain Glory, Part V., Vol. IV., chap. xix. and ~~xx.~~; Calais Tower, Part V., I., 2; The Roman Campagna, Preface to Second edition; St. Mark's, Stones of Venice, II., iv.

Newman. Selections from Prose Writings, ed. by Gates, with introductory essay, in Engl. R. Life, by R. H. Hutton; by J. H. Jennings; by Wm. Barry. Essays by Hutton, Church, Gates, W. Meynell. The Oxford Movement, by R. W. Church.

Suggested Reading. The Site of a University, in Historical Sketches, 1854. In what way does Newman ally himself with the

Romantic movement of the nineteenth century? In what respect does he stand apart from it?

Arnold (Prose). Selections in Engl. R. Essays by Hutton, F. Harrison, Gates, Brownell. Perhaps the best of Arnold's essays for introductory reading is that on The Study of Poetry prefixed to Ward's English Poets. An outline of that essay will give an excellent idea of Arnold's clearness of method. Compare the chances of Arnold with those of Ruskin for reaching a large class of readers. Does his prose have many of the qualities of the highest literature?

Huxley. Selections in the several volumes of Little Masterpieces of Science. Life and Letters, by Leonard Huxley. Read the brief Autobiography in the first volume of his collected works; also the Address on A Liberal Education (vol. iii., or Genung's Rhetorical Analysis, or Little Masterpieces of Science—Mind).

CHAPTER XXI.

Rossetti. Collected Works, 2 vols. The Rossettis, by E. L. Cary. The Æsthetic Movement in England, by W. Hamilton. Essays by Swinburne, Pater, Mabie, and Theodore Watts. History of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, by P. H. Bate.

Morris. Poetical Works, 11 vols. Selections in Stedman, and Page. Life, by J. W. Mackail, 2 vols.; by E. L. Cary. Essays by Swinburne, Saintsbury, Sharp.

Swinburne. Collected Works, 12 vols. Selections, in B. L. S. Essays by Gosse (Century Magazine, May 1902), Saintsbury, T. Wratislaw.

Pater. Selections from writings in Engl. R. A personal sketch by E. Gosse, Contemporary Review, December, 1894. Essays by Lionel Johnson, Geo. Saintsbury, Arthur Symonds, and E. E. Hale (in Engl. R. above).

Stevenson. Works, including Letters, Thistle Ed., 24 vols. Biographical ed. in course of publication. Life, by G. Balfour, 2 vols. Essays, by H. James, J. J. Chapman, A. H. Japp. Treasure Island in Lake E. C. Among his characteristic essays are Æs Triplex, An Apology for Idlers, and Thoreau. Among his best short stories are Olalla, The Beach of Falesë, Providence and the Guitar, The Pavilion on the Links, The Sire de Maletroit's Door, and A Lodging for a Night.

11. GENERAL REVIEW QUESTIONS.

OLD ENGLISH PERIOD (INTRODUCTION AND CHAPTERS I. AND II.).

Whence comes the name "England"? In distinction from it, what is the proper use of the name "Britain"? Of "Great Britain"? Who were the Celts? To what group of languages does English belong? What dialects of English may be distinguished? From which is modern Literary English descended? What two events in English history were accompanied by marked changes in the language? What was the nature of these changes? (See Appendix A. 2). What special influences added the Latin element? What is the character of the language to-day?

What name do we give to the early period? Where was literature first cultivated? What can you tell of the origin of *Beowulf*? Describe its form. What does it reveal of the character and conditions of the people? What new element came into the literature with *Cædmon*? Name other writers of *Cædmon's* time. In what dialect are their writings preserved? What general difference is there between the early literature of the North and that of the South? Who was most prominent in the latter?

MIDDLE ENGLISH PERIOD (CHAPTERS III. TO VI.).

What is meant by the "Romance influence" which was felt in England through the Middle Ages? What particular legends were then the staple themes of imaginative literature? Was English much written?

What long poem marks a revival of English? What romances of possibly native origin were then written?

What new spirit was manifest in the fourteenth century? Did literature benefit? Name several anonymous poems of merit? What prose work of doubtful authorship appeared? How does it differ from the prose that went before? Name another very important contribution to English prose at this time. What religious poet belongs to this period? What learned poet? What poet of great genius? Compare the work of Chaucer carefully with all that had gone before in order to realize how much he added. In what various ways did he make literature broader? Is the nature element in his poetry a new one? The element of humor? What, in a word, is the greatest element? What was his contribution to poetic form?

Did Chaucer's successors maintain his standards? What kind of literature thrived in the fifteenth century? Distinguish between

Miracle Plays and Moralities. What chiefly makes their history interesting? What event of great literary significance marked the close of the fifteenth century? What book of importance was produced then? What is its importance? Where was poetry chiefly cultivated at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and by whom? Why is Skelton remembered?

MODERN ENGLISH PERIOD, FIRST DIVISION (CHAPTERS VII. TO XI.).

The years 1557, 1558 (Chapter VIII.) are significant in literature, but what good reasons are there (historical, linguistic, and literary) for going back fifty years or more for the beginning of the modern era? What was the Renaissance? The Reformation? Why is the special importance of More's Utopia to English literature less than its general importance? What was probably the most important literary event of Henry VIII.'s reign? Was it intended to have a literary significance? Who was Latimer? What prose writers had literary aims? What poets? What foreign influence did these latter introduce? What did they add to what Chaucer had already done for the form of verse?

Why are the dates 1557 and 1558 of particular significance to English literature? What great poet was a boy at the time of Queen Elizabeth's accession? What great one was born not long afterward? What were the characteristics of the age? What three or four writers gave lustre to it, and what was the special contribution of each? Which was of the greatest significance æsthetically? Which socially? Which intellectually? What lesser writer incarnates the spirit of the age? In what literary achievement did he share? What can you say of Elizabethan lyric poetry generally?

Sketch the rise of the drama. What was Marlowe's service? What is there about Shakespeare's life that seems to make his achievement the more remarkable? Wherein do his dramas transcend all that had preceded? How are they best characterized in a short phrase? What imaginative excesses or defects do they betray? What is meant by Shakespeare's "universality"? How does Jonson differ from Shakespeare? Name other conspicuous dramatists of the time.

Was the prose of the time highly imaginative? Define "Euphuism." Explain its origin. What great churchman wrote at this time? What great philosopher and statesman? What were the general characteristics of prose style? What two prose works of the period have survived as living books?

Why is the end of the sixteenth century not a good dividing point in literature? What writer's death gives it some importance as such? What could be said in favor of 1603? 1616? 1625-26? 1637? What is meant by the "Jacobean period"? Why is it both convenient and proper to include it as a part of the Elizabethan age? What great conflict marked the Caroline period? What was the effect upon imagination? Upon moral earnestness? Upon the drama? Upon lyric poetry? Did the latter degenerate? What is a "conceit"? Who was John Donne? Describe the two classes of Caroline poets. Which particular poet is best remembered to-day, and why? What is the character of Cowley's poetry, and what its service? Is the prose of the period important? How wide is its range? What of its form? What sets Milton apart from most of the writers of the time? Has his work any Elizabethan characteristics? Spontaneity? Universality? Human interest? What are its special characteristics and how are they allied to the Puritan spirit?

MODERN ENGLISH PERIOD, SECOND DIVISION (CHAPTERS XII. TO XV.).

What is meant by the Restoration? Had it any influence in restoring earlier literary conditions, or only in changing the conditions? What condition of social life does the Restoration drama reflect? What rhymester and what diarist are to be closely connected with the political changes? Why is *Paradise Lost* not properly a poem of this period? What great prose writer of this generation also really represents the preceding? Why should he not have been touched by the new fashions? Compare and contrast his great work with Milton's epic. Who was the great Restoration writer proper? How voluminous is his work? How varied in form and in spirit? What particular foreign influence does he reflect? How far would it be true to say that literature in this period shifted back from the country to the town and court? What part does nature play in it? What species of literature, of which we have heard little hitherto, came into prominence? What definite advance was made in prose? Was it wholly a change for the better?

What advance, or slow recovery rather, in social morality was made in the eighteenth century? Was it directed by religious enthusiasm or cold reason? What kind of social life accompanied it? What turn did all this give to literature? Who possessed the keenest mind of the age and became its great satirist? What unpleasant aspects of the age are thus disclosed? What writers reflected best the better spirit of the time? How did they go about

their mission? What new power in literature did they virtually establish? What was their service to prose form? What in general can you say of the poetry of the time? What in particular of Pope's—of its imaginativeness, didacticism, conventionality, wit, brilliance, finish? Define "Classicism" as applied to this period. Why may the age aptly be called "Augustan"?

What is the difference between a novel and a romance? Name some early English romances. What steps toward the novel had been taken in the seventeenth century? What additional steps were taken by Addison and Steele? Is there any connection between the rise of this form and the decay of the drama? What great classic of the early eighteenth century comes near being a novel, and in what does it excel? Just when and with what book was the novel proper born? By what greater successors was this book speedily followed? What drawbacks do they possess from the point of view of modern taste? Who was probably the master novelist of the period? Who the most eccentric? What element of degeneracy is found in the latter?

Whose was the real dominating influence in the middle of the eighteenth century, and how did he exercise his influence? Describe the downfall of literary patronage. What was the Dictator's attitude toward classicism and conventionality? Was he a poet? a novelist? an essayist? a philosopher? What of his prose style? What other great miscellaneous writer followed him closely? Did he excel him in anything? What other writers helped to make the eighteenth century famous for its prose? What writer toward the end of the century further establishes its character as an age of "prose and reason"? How far was Burke a conservative? What evidence of change is to be seen in his work? What was the "romantic revival"? Trace it in fiction; in poetry. In whose poetry did the new spirit first conspicuously appear? Who were the "melancholy" poets of the middle of the century, and what was the greatest poem? What two or three literary events in the seventh decade accelerated the romantic revival? What four important poets diversely stood for it? Describe Cowper's attitude towards romanticism. Would it be right to speak of Burns as having consciously taken any attitude towards this revival? How then did Burns contribute to it?

Review the literary achievements of the eighteenth century. What four poems (of Pope, Gray, Goldsmith, and Burns) stand out as classics? What great translation was made? What monuments of scholarship (by Johnson and Gibbon) and what model of elo-

quence (by Burke) were bequeathed? What prose classics (by Addison, Defoe, Swift, Johnson, and Goldsmith) are still very widely read?

MODERN ENGLISH PERIOD, THIRD DIVISION.

(CHAPTERS XVI. TO XXI.)

What is meant by the passing of the Augustan era? Was it synonymous with the triumph of Romanticism? What is Romanticism, or what are some of its features? What makes the year 1798 memorable in literature? What was Wordsworth's poetic creed? How did Coleridge's differ? Which was the greater poet, and why? Whose influence upon later poets is the more obvious? Who wrote the earliest romantic poetry of the nineteenth century that became popular? Name several minor popular poets. What poet of this great group attained to the widest and most sensational fame? Why? What other poet is to be linked with him as distinctly "revolutionary"? What forms did their revolt take? What were the ideals of the latter? Which of the two was the greater personal force? Which the higher poet in the stricter sense of the word? Which has had the greater influence on succeeding poetry? What younger poet than any of these came to be most influential in determining the direction that later nineteenth century poetry was to take? What was his particular poetic creed?

How far does the fiction of the early nineteenth century show traces of the realism of the eighteenth, and what really great novelist belongs to this school? What still greater writer of fiction, at least in the common judgment, stands with the poets of the romantic triumph? Show how his works may be called almost equally well romances or novels. In what does their romanticism consist? What term most exactly defines them? Can their influence be easily traced in the subsequent fiction of both England and America?

Can the miscellaneous prose of the early nineteenth century be described by any less general term than "motley"? What form of prose activity somewhat similar to one of a hundred years before is to be noted? What is there about the prose that is "new"—different from that of the eighteenth century? Is it not really something old? How is it allied to romanticism? Who was the unique semi-classicist? The historical essayist? Which had the most erratic style? Which the most ornate and rhythmical? Which the clearest?

What great social movements mark the nineteenth century as a whole? Are they reflected in the literature of the Victorian age?

How does Tennyson reflect them? How far is he the spokesman of the lower classes? Of the university scholars and theologians? Of the intelligent middle classes? What does he owe to Wordsworth? To Keats? To Malory? Is Browning so distinctly English? Are his themes of more nearly universal interest? Are they so popular? Is he to be closely compared with any forerunner or contemporary? What intellectual tendency of the time does he represent? In what respect is his poetry a corrective for Tennyson's, Arnold's, and Fitzgerald's? Who was the academic poet of the time? Was he as versatile as Tennyson? As tonic as Browning? In what, if anything, does he maintain equality with them? What claim has Clough to inclusion with these poets?

What relation does the Victorian novel bear in general to Scott's fiction? To the novel of the eighteenth century? What relation to the actual conditions of its own time? Who was the great novelist of the humbler classes? What service did he perform, social and literary? What great novelist dealt with the life of the upper classes? What very different method did he employ for the elevation of his fellowmen? Did he specifically aim at that, or did he work more in the spirit of an artist? In what respects is he like Fielding? What minor novelists followed in the steps of these two leaders? What two women novelists approached them in power, and what does each represent?

Define Carlyle's attitude toward the tendencies of his time. Was his influence good—or may we say that it was morally good though sometimes practically misdirected? What of his influence on style? Of his greatness as a historian? How does Ruskin ally himself with Keats and Tennyson? How with Carlyle, Dickens, and Kingsley? What were his defects as a critic? His merits as a writer of prose? What healthful influence did he exert? Why was Arnold a better critic than Ruskin? What different class was he most likely to influence? Is there anything romantic about his prose? Name some minor representatives of the activities of the middle of the century—in history, science, theology, etc.

In what did the mediævalism of Scott, the mysticism of Coleridge, the idealism of Shelley, and the æsthetic and semi-pagan creed of Keats culminate in the later part of the century, and through what intermediate influences? What are the good aspects of the later æsthetic movement? Who is the mystic among the Pre-Raphaelites? Who the mediævalist? Who the ardent republican and master lyrist? Show that, with all its wonderful variety, there has

been no essential change in the spirit of nineteenth century poetry. How far back must we go to find a like spirit and poetic productivity? How does Stevenson's work hark back, not only to the beginning of the nineteenth century, but to the very beginning of English literature?

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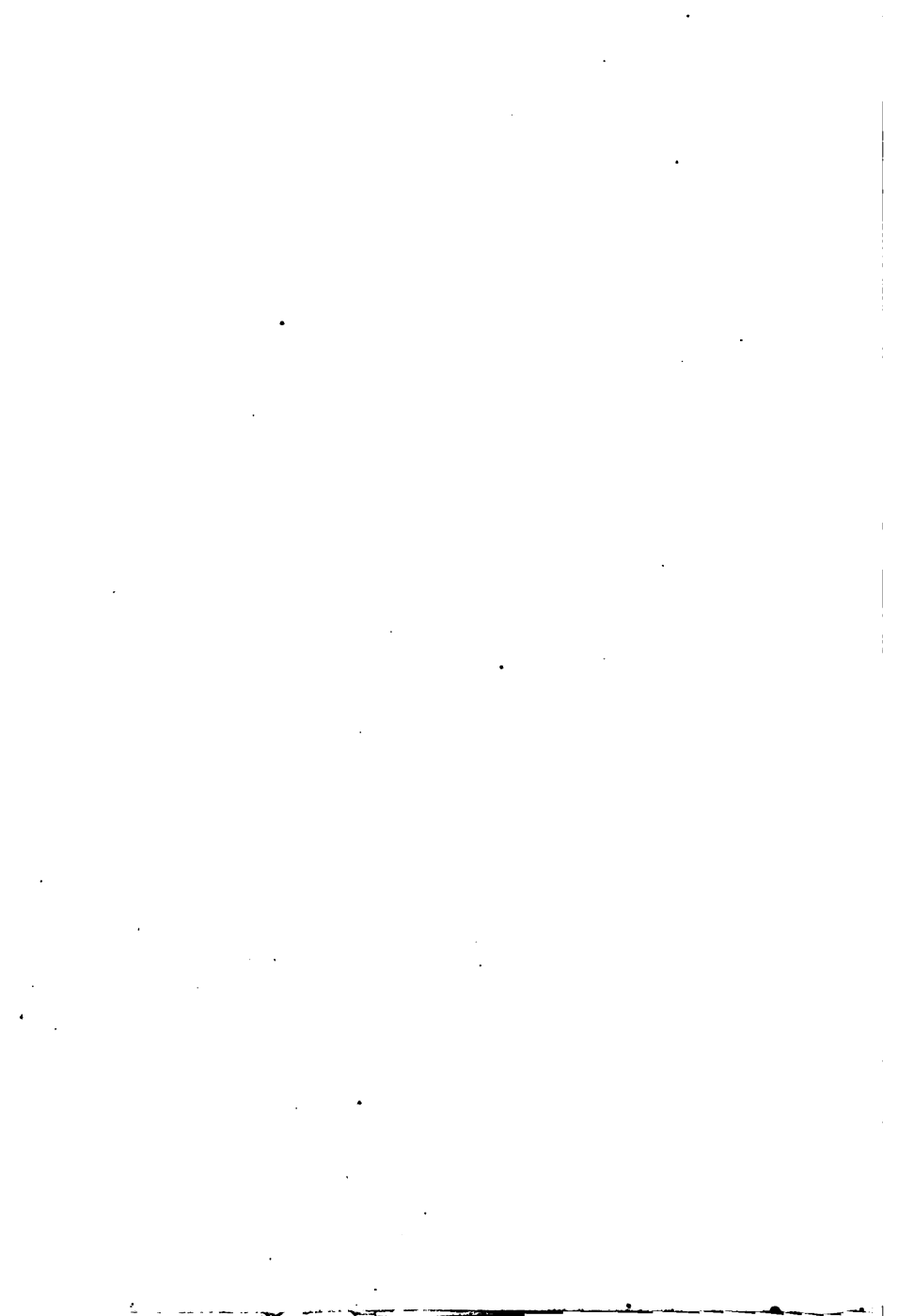
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